

Havianas' History

(An early 21st century history about girls wearing flip-flops in all kinds of places, with stories to tell!)



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Havaianas' history

Sandals of all shapes and sizes have, for centuries, been considered the simplest solution to the problem of how to cover the foot and they were the first example of protection for feet. The simplicity of their form makes them ideal for countries with hot climates and for this reason they are part of the culture in Mediterranean and some Asian countries. Removing your shoes and putting on sandals before going in to the house is a Japanese custom which indicates respect and humility.

Everything points to the Zori, a Japanese sandal, as the inspiration for the creation on 14 June, 1962, of the Havaiana sandal. But the Brazilian version had a plus point which made all the difference; it was made of a natural and 100% local material, rubber, which guaranteed that the sandals were both long-wearing and comfortable. The idea for the new sandal was so simple that its fame spread like wild-fire. In less than a year São Paulo Alpargatas was making more than a thousand pairs of sandals per day - and selling them all. This gave rise to imitations. At least the competition tried....but they did not bargain for the quality of the "real thing", the only sandals which "do not lose their shape, have no smell and on which the straps do not break".

Both pretty and a pleasure to wear the Havaianas sandal became a cult object. The person who does not have at least one pair - no matter what colour - is just not with it; these sandals are a must in the wardrobe or suitcase of any fashion-conscious person.

A good pair of Havaiana sandals looks good in the city, on the beach or at the pool, blends well with the blue of the sea and sky but is also equal to the demands of the hard life. On a march of the Land Reform Movement on Brasilia thousands of men, women and children crossed the country wearing what on their feet? Havaiana sandals. At the other extreme, socialites, artists and the President of the Republic, famous feet all (and some not so famous) can be seen wearing their gaily-coloured Havaianas. It is, without doubt, the most democratic sandal known to man because in the words of the writer Jorge Amado, himself the wearer of jeans and Havaianas, they "grace the feet of both the poor and rich alike".

These sandals are the face (or should it be, the feet!) of at least three generations of Brazilians. They survived the hippie movement, strode through the 70's, 80's and 90's and are in fine form today, thank you very much! In fact, ever aware of what is going on, they have been involved in every popular trend and have changed in accordance with the dictates of fashion. In 1994 they gained a new design - the single-coloured Top Havaianas, a clear reference to their position in the market, since they were more expensive than the traditional sandal. VIP's and the media were the first to receive the new sandals - handed to

them personally. It was fantastic. The fashion columns of newspapers and magazines were unanimous: Top Havaiana sandals were causing a revolution both in fashion and in the market. They became an icon; an object of desire, an obligatory fashion accessory. They became synonymous with sandals.

The Havaiana case-study has attracted attention from all quarters and has been the theme of masters degrees and work in schools and universities. It was their simple and intelligent design which earned them a place as one Brazil's exhibits on the Craft and Design: a Continuous Process stand at Expo-98 in Lisbon and a prominent position in the Design and Materials exhibition held in São Paulo at the end of 1997.

Segmenting its market São Paulo Alpargatas created a model for every foot and every taste: the Original, the Havaiana Brasil, launched during the '98 World Cup, the Surfer, the Fashion, the Crystal Fashion, the Kids, the Club, the Floral, the Alamonana, the Millennium and others which will soon be launched.

In the Havaianas factory in Campina Grande, Paraíba, 5 pairs of sandals per second are produced, which add up to 105 million pairs per year. Since their launch 2.2 billion pairs of Havaiana sandals have been produced and sold (if all the size 37 sandals were laid end to end they would go around the world 50 times). Today we know that two out of every three Brazilians get through one pair of Havaianas on average per year.

The quality of the product, the marketing strategy and the advertising campaign, based on the real statements of famous people who wear Havaianas - a tried and tested tradition of São Paulo Alpargatas for many years - have given life to the traditional sandal, although it really needs no great introduction. The first person to advertise the product was Chico Anysio; he was involved for many years. In the 90's he returned to star in one of the launch ads. for Top Havaianas where he announced that "this is an old love of mine". There was such a close link between the artist and the product that there was a time when people thought he was the owner of the company. Chico Anysio left and Thereza Collor, elected the muse of the North-east of Brazil in a survey conducted by São Paulo Alpargatas, took over the starring role. "Everybody wears Havaianas" was the tag-line of the advertising campaign which went on the air soon after with the actor Luis Fernando Guimarães who used to catch stars such as Vera Fischer, Malu Mader, Bebeto and Mauricio Mattar wearing their Havaiana sandals.

On TV the popularity of Carolina Ferraz fell when she took off her Havaianas. Cristiana Oliveira took off her clothes item by item to discover what was responsible for the extra milligrams which the broken scales were registering. In another ad a fan almost uncovers the identity of a heavily-disguised Fabio Assunção on a beach because of his sandals. A little while after a boy kisses the sandals of Rodrigo Santoro thinking that they belong to Luana Piovani, whilst another borrows Deborah Secco's Havaianas to use as goal-posts. Marcos Palmeira, Raí, Popó, Luma de Oliveira and Reinaldo Gianecchini also appeared on the small screen in amusing situations all related to Havaianas.

Havaianas were the star of the last summer of the old millennium. They appeared in more than 60 original colours. Their beauty was enhanced by the creative talents of those who

decorated their straps with sequins, glass beads and small shells or painted the soles. Soles and straps from different sandals were swapped around and they took on a whole new and unique appearance. The more daring wearer inverted the straps and created a totally different sandal or wore one colour on one foot and another on the other.

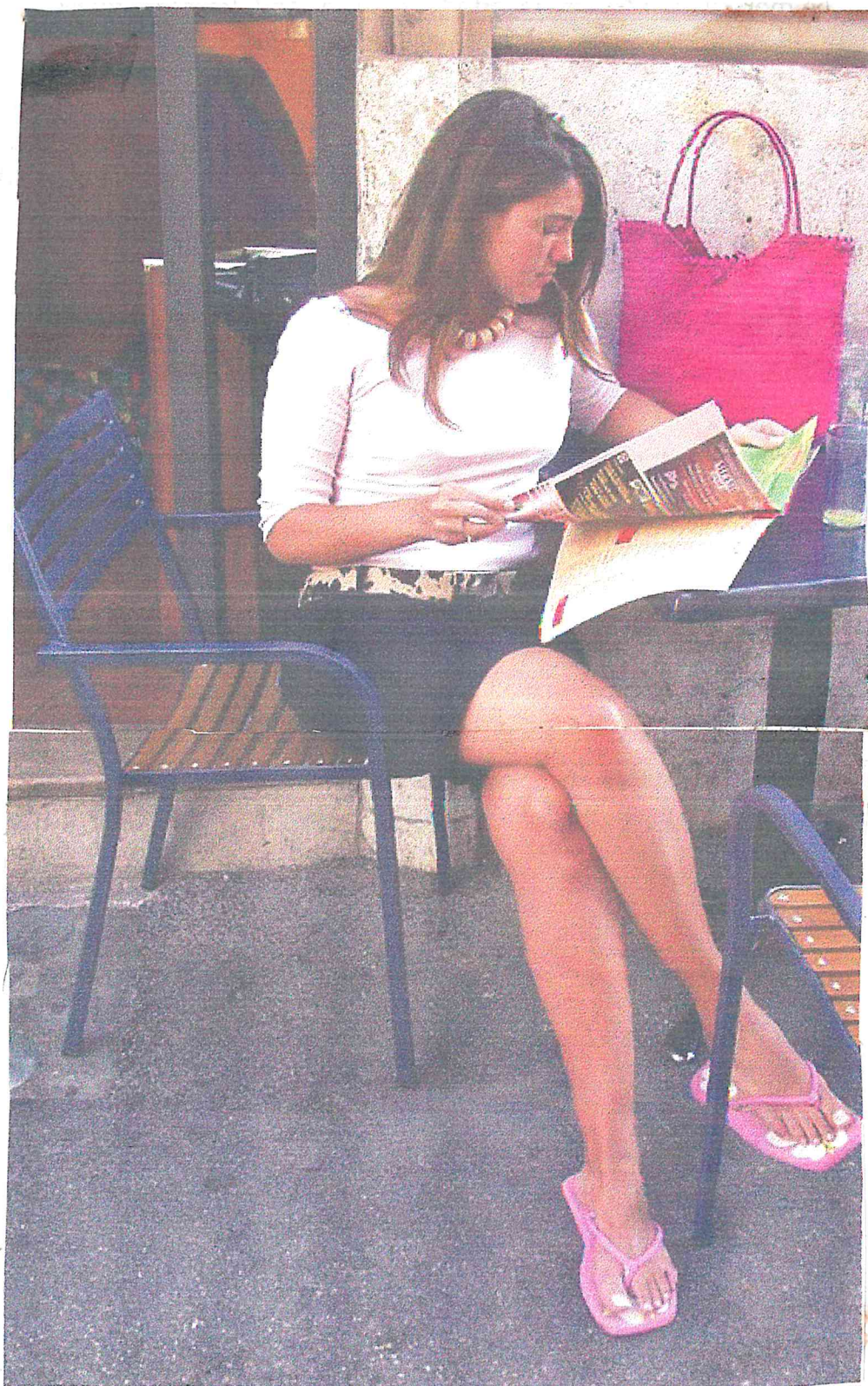
"If", as Fernando de Barros says "almost nothing will change in the fashion world, at least over the next ten years, until a new generation appears and invents a new fashion" then one thing is certain: Havaiana sandals, an object of desire, have glamour, personality and style. They are basic, irresistible, indispensable and will be eternal as long as they last.

From **havaianas** official site

Dharling Dharma--This is Jenna Elfman, who for five years was an actress on the television series, "Dharma & Greg" (1997-2002). Jenna is modeling in the picture, which was taken in Los Angeles in 2001, a red spaghetti-strapped blouse, navy blue skirt, and red exercise sandals, which technically can be called flip-flops.

(Picture originally appeared on website hitwgang.com in 2001)





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L'Havaianas, aux 2,5 milliards de paires vendues

Déclinée en 60 coloris, la savate des favelas est l'accessoire culte des "fashion victims".

• LE MONDE | 30.08.02 | 11h35

Il y a encore peu de temps, on n'aurait pas fait grand cas de l'Havaianas, une tong très ordinaire en caoutchouc coloré fabriquée au Brésil depuis 1962. Pourtant, en moins de dix ans, la chaussure bon marché des favelas a gagné sa place dans les valises des fashion victims. Les chiffres donnent le tournis : à raison de cinq paires produites par seconde dans les usines de Campina Grande, dans l'Etat de Paraíba, Havaianas a vendu 2,5 milliards de tongs en quarante ans.

Inspirées des zori japonais, les tongs Havaianas font l'objet d'un dépôt de brevet avec leur semelle et leur bride en caoutchouc naturel, suffisamment souples et épaisses pour assurer le confort du pied. Le succès ne se fait pas attendre. Au bout de quelques mois, plus d'une centaine de paires sont vendues chaque jour et l'Havaianas devient une des façons les plus économiques de se chauffer au Brésil. Mais rêvant d'un destin plus illustre pour ces modestes savates, les dirigeants d'Havaianas décident de changer radicalement l'image de la marque à partir de 1994. Avec la ligne Havaianas Top, caractérisée par une semelle un peu plus épaisse et une large gamme de coloris, les prix grimpent.

Les nouveaux modèles sont envoyés à des personnalités médiatiques, dont le président de la République Cardoso, des stars brésiliennes du sport, de Raï à Gustavo Kuerten, et des top-models comme Kate Moss ou Naomi Campbell qui, en quelques foulées, les transforment en accessoire culte. Investissant environ 12 % de son chiffre d'affaires - évalué à 115 millions d'euros en 2001 - dans la communication, la marque se donne les moyens de soigner son image et diffuse ses visuels publicitaires dans les supports les plus en vue, comme le mensuel londonien d'art de vivre Wallpaper. En accord avec le "revival" hippy, la campagne de l'été 2002 met en scène une tong vert anis sur un pied bleu décoré de fleurettes et de spirales psychédéliques, accompagné du slogan "La meilleure sandale en caoutchouc du monde".

Pour coller aux tendances, elle est déclinée dans une soixantaine de coloris, en version monochrome ou bicolore, avec des hibiscus ou des bambous, en relief sur la semelle. Les enfants et les surfeurs ont leur propre ligne et on ne compte plus les éditions spéciales comme la tong "auriverde" (or et vert), Coupe du monde, et les modèles aux couleurs des

équipes de football dont 300 000 paires trouvent preneurs chaque mois au Brésil. Dans un pays qui compte 170 millions d'habitants, Havaianas vend 130 millions de paires par an et en exporte plus de 10 millions. Déjà populaire au Japon et en Australie, où une tong sur deux est une Havaianas, elle est distribuée en France depuis 2001 dans plus de 150 points de vente.

Si au Brésil le modèle traditionnel n'excède pas les 2 euros, il est facturé environ 20 euros en France. "Elle plaît pour son côté jet-set un peu exotique", assure Karine d'Aste, chef de produit chaussures femmes aux Galeries Lafayette qui lui ont consacré un stand en mars, lors de l'exposition Brésil. La clientèle pouvait personnaliser les couleurs de sa tong, en choisissant séparément la bride et la semelle. On peut même se la procurer à la Favela Chic, restaurant et lieu de nuit brésilien installé à Paris. 3000 paires défectueuses ont d'ailleurs servi à décorer l'espace pour des soirées à thème. Pour Daniella, assistante de production à la Favela Chic, "elles sont parfaites pour danser la samba".

Anne-Laure Quilleriet



La longue marche de la tong

LE MONDE | 30.08.02 | 11h35

Ce soulier minimaliste, créé il y a plus de 5 000 ans en Egypte, chaussure la plus portée au monde, gagne les podiums des créateurs et parade de la plage aux cocktails.

Une bride en forme de Y, accrochée à une semelle. Difficile d'imaginer plus simple pour se chauffer. Avec sa construction épurée, qui retient le pied entre le gros orteil et son voisin, la tong a traversé les millénaires et s'offre un succès triomphant dans la mode de l'été 2002. Des campings de la Côte d'Azur aux plages de Rio, dans les rues du Caire ou de Delhi, le claquement sec de sa semelle contre le talon résonne sur les cinq continents. Partout où le climat et les habitudes culturelles invitent à se déchausser plusieurs fois par jour. Partout où la nécessité conduit à se protéger le pied avec un minimum de frais. En lanières de palmier ou de papyrus, en roseau ou en cuir, la tong a fait ses premiers pas en Egypte, plus de 3 000 ans avant notre ère. "Les Egyptiens réalisaient des empreintes de leurs pieds dans le sable humide, y moulaient du papyrus tressé découpé aux bonnes dimensions, et fixaient sur ces semelles des lanières de cuir brut", raconte Linda O'Keeffe,

dans l'ouvrage Chaussures(éd. Könemann, 1997). Aussi minimalistes que les tongs actuelles, ces sandales protégeaient le pied des aspérités du sol tout en l'exposant presque entièrement, ce qui permettait de l'orner de bijoux. "Durant toute l'antique civilisation égyptienne, explique Christiane Desroches- Noblecourt dans une lettre à Jean-Paul Roux, chercheur au CNRS, les pharaons étaient escortés de leur porte-sandales. On aperçoit cet assistant du roi dès la première dynastie, sur la célèbre palette de Narmer. (...) Ces sandales semblent être associées à l'idée de victoire et de protection." Dans la vie quotidienne, les Egyptiens marchent pieds nus et la tong est un accessoire d'apparat dont le raffinement n'a pas été égalé pendant des siècles. "Les exemplaires qui ont été retrouvés dans la tombe de Toutankhamon sont égayés de découpages de peau de couleurs et de perles qui imitent des motifs floraux. Ces sandales seraient tout à fait à leur place dans la garde-robe de nos contemporaines réunissant leurs atours en vue d'un séjour sur la Côte d'Azur", poursuit l'égyptologue.

Adoptée par de nombreuses civilisations, la tong va connaître au Japon des interprétations aussi diverses qu'extravagantes. Les plus rudimentaires sont les waraji, des sandales de paille retenues par des ficelles sanglées autour de la cheville, que chaussèrent les plus pauvres pendant des siècles. Dans ce pays, où par tradition le pied n'est pas contraint, on porte des zori, tongs en paille tressée à bride de tissu, ou des geta, perchées sur des semelles de bois dont la particularité est d'être ambidextres. L'hiver, on se réchauffe dans des tabi, des chaussettes qui séparent le pouce des autres doigts de pieds qu'on peut accompagner de bottines de protection en velours.

Loin d'être synonyme de farniente comme en Europe, la tong a longtemps servi d'outil de travail. Véritable prolongement du pied en fonction des métiers, elle est dotée de pointes sous la semelle pour attraper les poissons ou de lattes de bois permettant d'évoluer dans l'eau et la boue des rizières. La collection de Delphine Kohler, créatrice de la marque Facteur Céleste, en souligne la variété avec une geta coiffée d'un capot amovible pour protéger de la pluie, une tong " patin à glace"ou un modèle en bambou pour masser la voûte plantaire. Au pays du Soleil levant, où les chaussures occidentales font leur apparition à la fin du XIXe, l'usage des geta et des zori dans la vie quotidienne ne déclinera qu'après 1955.

LA SANDALE DU VACANCIER

Le développement du caoutchouc industriel banalise son aspect et en fait le soulier le plus répandu au monde, de Manille à Cotonou. La chaussure du pauvre s'adapte aux moyens du bord, avec des versions improvisées dans de vieux pneus (comme la "Ho Chi Minh", à Hanoï) ou des emballages plastiques. En 1962, le Brésil adopte massivement l'Havaianas en caoutchouc naturel. Les Américains la rapportent du Vietnam et la baptisent "thong ", ce qui signifie " lanière" en anglais. Les publicités parlent déjà de "l'article qui fait fureur dans

le monde entier". Les Français l'appellent "tong", vers 1965, jouant sur la consonance asiatique du mot.

Etanche et bon marché, elle devient la sandale du vacancier, qui la malmène sans scrupules, le temps d'un été. Ceux qui ne supportent pas le frottement de la bride entre les orteils lui préfèrent l'espadrille ou la claquette "maître nageur". Longtemps, elle collera à l'image du "beauf" en bob et mini-maillot traînant des pieds dans les allées des campings. C'est une entreprise auvergnate, Plastic Auvergne, qui fabrique les premières paires françaises au début des années 1970, sous la marque Sarraizienne. "Sur les plages, on voyait les modèles asiatiques découpés dans des plaques rigides de caoutchouc. L'originalité était de les fabriquer dans un PVC expansé, souple et léger", précise Marc Paslier, président du directoire de Plastic Auvergne, leader européen de la chaussure plastique, à l'origine d'un autre best-seller des bazars côtiers, la "méduse", née en 1946.

Mais le soulier démocratique porté par toute la famille pêche par son manque de fantaisie : la semelle est blanche et les brides de couleur, à l'exception des modèles fillettes décorés d'une marguerite ou d'une fleur en tissu.

Après l'effort, les surfeurs qui sillonnent les plages du globe, vont apprécier sa démarche nonchalante. Au fil des années, les "slap" ("claque") se perfectionnent pour soulager les voûtes plantaires fatiguées. Créée en 1986, par le groupe brésilien Grendene, la marque Rider propose des modèles avec des bulles d'air injectées dans le plastique pour une sensation de confort et de légèreté, et Oakley cale le pied dans des semelles anatomiques moulées.

LE STRING DU PIED

Aujourd'hui la tong passe sans complexe des plages aux cocktails, renouant avec son lointain passé de chaussures d'apparat. "C'est un peu le string du pied, ironise Christian Louboutin, un soulier très minimal qui ne cache rien".

En 1992, les New-Yorkaises se disputent chez Barney's la première tong baptisée String, un modèle en cuir verni doté d'un talon de 5 cm. Quelques mois plus tard, il imagine la Spanish String, en satin bordé de dentelle, pour répondre au fantasme d'un associé qui lui a demandé un jour de dessiner "une petite culotte pour les pieds". Le courant zen des années

1990, puis les relents nostalgiques de la mode hippy chic, ont ancré solidement la tong sur le bitume. Elle figure en bonne place dans le vestiaire des "bobos" qui ne jurent que par les sandales en bois et perles d'argent de Jutta Neumann, une Allemande installée à New York, ou le modèle Gizeh de Birkenstock, dont le principal mérite est d'installer confortablement le pied sur une semelle orthopédique antichocs.

"The flat season", "la saison plate", annonçait en mars le supplément How to spend it, du Financial Times. "Les Anglaises détestaient l'idée de porter des flip-flop en dehors de la plage", y déclare la créatrice de souliers Emma Hope, "mais le développement des bars à ongles a changé tout ça". Et quand Manolo Blahnik avoue que "les sandales plates peuvent faire une démarche très féline", le monde de la mode range ses talons hauts. On n'a jamais vu autant de tongs-bijoux : à boucle de strass ou de bois précieux chez Sergio Rossi, en crocodile et paille tressée (Emanuel Ungaro), en cuir décoré d'arabesques dorées (Prada) ou en cuir et laque pour Egypte, d'Hermès, un modèle préparé pendant plusieurs semaines par un artisan vietnamien. Le deuxième Concours international des jeunes créateurs de chaussures, organisé par la maison Ferragamo, a d'ailleurs récompensé une tong en aluminium et cuir naturel créée par un jeune Thaïlandais, pour son design remarquablement pur et simple. Et la "tongmania" ne devrait pas s'arrêter de si tôt : elle a foulé tous les podiums lors des défilés hommes de l'été 2003.

Anne-Laure Quilleriet

Les souliers bijoux de Facteur Céleste

Fascinée par "le minimalisme fonctionnel" de la tong et des souliers japonais, Delphine Kohler leur a presque entièrement dédié sa marque Facteur Céleste. "J'ai toujours trouvé intéressant d'aborder des objets anodins ou méprisés, mais symboliquement très forts", dit la créatrice qui a transformé la chaussure du pauvre en véritable bijou de pied. Au début des années 1990, lorsque son mari lui offre des zori traditionnels japonais, elle se contente de les admirer, car ces sandales n'existent qu'en petite taille. En 1994, elle se rend à son tour au Japon. De ce voyage qui allait influencer en profondeur sa carrière de créatrice de

sacs, elle ramène les fameuses brides de velours pour les adapter sur des semelles en plastique épais. Ses amies passent commande. L'affaire se professionnalise : sur un Salon d'accessoires, elle présente quelques paires, qui rencontrent un succès immédiat. Aujourd'hui, Facteur Céleste diffuse une trentaine de modèles, comme la tong Glitter à semelle d'alcantara et bride en gros-grain pailleté, le zori Haricot magique pour enfant ou la geta Geisha vintage. "Je parle plus de culture que de mode", explique Delphine Kohler, qui reconduit la plupart des formes d'une année sur l'autre et confie la fabrication de ses modèles à une petite usine du Pays basque.



De bon... tong

Paris, 1^{er} Août 2002

Dans l'objectif de *Zurban*, les accessoires incontournables de l'été. Cette semaine, rencontre avec des Parisiens qui ont trouvé chaussure à leur pied.

Ne pensez pas qu'il suffise d'enfiler n'importe quelles tongs pour avoir tout bon! Elles subissent, elles aussi, les diktats de la mode et suivent de très près les tendances. Enquête dans les rues de la capitale.

Marie et ses tongs bijoux

"Je suis très bijoux de pieds, alors quand je vois des tongs à paillettes ou perlées, je craque à tous les coups ! Ce que j'aime dans cette paire, c'est que la semelle à rayures bayadères casse le côté Barbie girl. Même s'il est vrai que, de toute façon, j'adore les accessoriser! Par exemple, j'essaie toujours de les coordonner avec mes bracelets de chevilles ou de choisir une couleur de vernis à ongles dans les mêmes tons".

Comme Marie: *Facteur céleste, la Rolls Royce de la tong, réalisée au Pays basque à la main. Pour le modèle Glitter, sorte de lurex (107€), ou le modèle à paillettes collées sur du velours (99€). 38, rue Quincampoix (3e), 01 42 77 12 46. M^o Rambuteau.*

Philippe et ses tongs chic

"Je viens de Biarritz, le pays du surf, autant dire que la tong fait partie de la panoplie. En revanche, là-bas, elles font très plage et sont beaucoup plus décontractées que celles que je porte aujourd'hui, qui sont en cuir, ce qui leur donne un aspect chic. Pour la ville, c'est

un bon compromis, ça permet d'avoir des chaussures ouvertes l'été, tout en restant élégant. D'ailleurs, la tong chic pour hommes entre dans les mœurs, j'en ai vu lors des défilés, portées avec des costumes, et même sur les marches à Cannes!"

Comme Philippe: *Camper, avec sa collection Twins qui propose des motifs avec semelles intérieures décorées d'une photo de fraises (85€) ou de joueurs de foot pour les garçons (90€). 1, rue du Cherche-Midi (6e), 01 45 48 22 00. M° Saint-Sulpice.*

Thévy et ses tongs laotiennes

"J'adore les tongs, j'en fais une grande consommation. L'été, c'est idéal: aéré et confortable. Cette paire vient du Laos, j'y suis allée en vacances cet hiver et j'ai craqué sur plusieurs modèles sur un marché. D'ailleurs, en général, je n'achète mes tongs qu'en Asie. Ce n'est pas du tout snob, c'est juste que là-bas, elles ne valent presque rien. Et puis je suis sûre de ne pas les voir sur tout le monde!"

Comme Thévy: *Graine d'intérieur pour ses tongs en tissu imprimé fleuri Hawaï (15€). 99, rue Rambuteau (1er), 01 55 80 78 28. M° Les Halles.*

Roxane et ses tongs de top model

"Au Brésil, Havaianas est une marque de référence. D'ailleurs, tous les top models en portent, de Naomi à Kate Moss en passant par Lætitia Casta. Généralement, je trouve les tongs inconfortables à l'entre-doigt, mais pas celles-ci. Je les réservais à la plage, mais je n'ai pas résisté à l'envie de les étrenner sur le bitume parisien. Pour les personnaliser, je me suis achetée une fleur en tissu que j'ai collée sur une seule tong pour le côté graphique. Côté allure, j'aime bien mélanger les styles en mariant par exemple des tongs en plastique avec une sobre veste noire".

Comme Roxane: *Havaianas, les tongs en plastique made in Brasil, qui se déclinent dans une multitude de couleurs, env. 20€. Galeries Lafayette, 40, boulevard Haussmann (9e), 01 42 82 34 56. M° Chaussée-d'Antin.*



Bien dans ses tongs

Par Claire MABRUT

Le Figaro, 31 juillet 2002

Dire que les fabricants de tongs peuvent se dorer la pilule les doigts de pieds en éventail n'a rien d'exagéré. Depuis deux ans, les ventes de tongs ont explosé.

Car la tong est branchée, définitivement sortie de la case " ringarde à tout âge "... surtout depuis que la boutique Colette a vendu des centaines de paires du modèle Sensi, en plastique bleu translucide frappé de l'inscription sous la semelle " who loves me follows me ".

Sympa quand on déambule sur le sable...

Marcher sur le sable sans se faire mal, voilà justement pourquoi les Egyptiens ont imaginé ces drôles de sandales (alors une simple semelle rigide en papyrus tressé et dotée de lanières de cuir) 3 500 ans avant JC.

Les impératrices romaines leur ont emboîté le pas avec des semelles moulées en or. Quant aux Indiens et aux Perses, ils sculptaient des semelles de bois avec des entredoigts.

" De manière générale, les chaussures révèlent le statut de ceux qui les portent, mais les sandales ont été alternativement des symboles de prestige et de pauvreté, de chasteté et de coquetterie ", remarque Linda O'Keeffe dans son ouvrage Chaussures (éd. Könemann).

La tong migre ensuite vers la Chine et le Japon. Là-bas, elle devient " zori " (une tong à talon compensé à bride en Y et qui se porte avec une chaussette à doigt marqué) puis " ghetta " au XXe siècle (une version montée sur patin de bois pouvant atteindre 10 centimètres et portée par les courtisanes).

Elle prendra son nom définitif pendant la guerre du Vietnam, les Américains ayant alors baptisé cette drôle de chaussure " thong " (lanière en français). Sa version tout plastique débarque en Europe dans les années 50 au retour d'Indochine des soldats français, mais avec la vague écolo des années 70 elle s'habille de cuir.

Au cours de ces vingt années, la tong fait des ravages sur les plages de Copacabana et de tout le Brésil. Patrie du maillot de bain, de la fiesta et du soleil par excellence, le Brésil voit naître à cette période deux grands fabricants de tongs : Havaianas et Rider.

La première, créée en 1962, vend aujourd'hui 120 millions de paires dans son pays d'origine pour 170 millions d'habitants, c'est un beau score et en a écoulé plus de 2 milliards sur toute la planète.

La seconde est issue d'un groupe qui a commencé par fabriquer des bouteilles de vin en plastique en 1971...

Depuis, les tongs maison sont en PVC injecté et figurent parmi les plus légères et les plus confortables du marché.

Du camping des Flots Bleus à la plage de la Voile Rouge à Saint-Tropez, la tong est donc

devenue incontournable à Bali comme en Auvergne, où la société La Sarraizienne (déjà créatrice de la fameuse " méduse ") en produit des centaines de milliers de paires.

Elle est même sortie lauréate du Concours international des jeunes designers de chaussures initié par Salvatore Ferragamo.

Son créateur, Youthachai Watanapanich, a voulu sa tong " anatomique ", montée sur une semelle d'aluminium et recouverte de cuir naturel. Editée en nombre limité par Ferragamo, la paire s'affiche quand même à 425 €...

Affirmer donc que la tong est branchée n'est pas peu dire. Il suffit de regarder du côté de la boutique Facteur Céleste, née en 1992 de la rencontre de deux créatrices de sacs, Isabelle Strutz et Delphine Kohler.

En 1994, Delphine participe au concours lancé par un restaurant de sushis et gagne un voyage au Japon. Sur place, elle découvre les tongs locales, les zoris, malheureusement trop petites pour elles (elles ne sont faites qu'en taille unique).

Elle rapporte donc quelques brides dans sa valise et se fabrique une paire à sa taille. La tong Facteur Céleste, avec un vrai pied gauche et un vrai pied droit (la tong japonaise étant ambidextre), est née. Semelles plates couvertes de chanvre ou d'alcantara, ornées de fleurs de lotus ou de simples brides de velours... on n'a pas fini de suivre le clap-clap des tongs à la trace.



Tong choc pour plastoc chic

Elle fleure bon la plage, le monoï et la planche de surf. Cet été, la claquette bon marché fait son entrée dans les salons et martèle le bitume.

Par Florence Duarte

L'Hebdo (Suisse), le 20 juin 2002

On les avait rangées dans un coin de notre enfance, entre les photos 6x6 du dernier été à Benidorm et la casquette à visière souple siglée Rivella. Cet été, de toute évidence, la tong en plastique bon marché, celle que nous enfiliions entre les deux premiers orteils pour aller à la piscote municipale et qui menaçait de s'échapper à chaque accélération du mollet, fait une apparition fracassante et inattendue sur la scène mode.

La claquette en plastoc, appelée aussi flip-flop, est sans doute le plus précieux accessoire de l'été 2002. Ultra accessible à l'origine, chaussure du pauvre de Brazza à Bombay, la tong vient d'être récupérée par les marques de luxe et transformée en objet tendance: la "brésilienne" est ainsi passée des favelas de Rio aux pieds pédicurés de Mouna Ayoub ou Nan Kempner. On en trouve chez Burberry, imprimées du fameux tartan (130 francs, mais avec semelle thermocollée s.v.p.), chez Emporio Armani, Max&Co (deuxième ligne de MaxMara), Fiorucci ou Miss Sixty. Dans les boutiques Navyboot de Suisse, les modèles unisexes "Cielo di giorno" (bleu ciel) et "Cielo di notte" (noir) sont de loin les plus abordables (35 francs), mais aussi les plus convoités. Une entrée au catalogue réussie pour cet accessoire griffé sur l'assise du pied: "Simple, pas chère, la tong change notre look quotidien", observe Oliver Kerstholt, responsable communication de la marque.

Pour Françoise Serralta, directrice de recherches à l'agence de style Peclers, à Paris, les claquettes en caoutchouc sont en fait des chaussures "faussement décontractées. Les maillots de bain sont de plus en plus chers. Le plastique des tongs est là pour casser le côté "couture" du vêtement de plage." Une petite note prolo à une silhouette très tape-à-l'œil, dont le mariage idéal pourrait être, par exemple, maillot Missoni très coûteux, très classieux, et "schlaps" H&M, rayées bayadère façon Paul Smith (7 fr. 90). Même point de vue au bureau de style parisien Nelly Rodi: "Il n'y a plus de total-look, certifie Michael Bonzom, styliste prêt-à-porter. On mixe tout." La tong de piscine, achetée 4 francs chez Tati, un poil plus cher chez Zara ou Gap, vient compléter judicieusement l'allure "hippie moderne", qui domine actuellement: jeans défoncé + haut vintage trouvé aux puces + besacé monstrueusement onéreuse (la plus en vogue, le modèle "conte de fées" de Vuitton, vaut 5430 francs).

Rescapées balnéaires

"On revisite la tong et on lui insuffle de l'optimisme", remarque Michael Bonzom. Imprimés fruits et légumes, cocotiers, pin-up, hibiscus, bandana ou palmette, la chaussure reflète une joie de vivre, un esprit "happy days" très Venice Beach. "Elle renvoie à une certaine nonchalance, à l'esprit bohème et nouveau nomade qui prédomine. Elle touche aussi à cette tendance régressive présente depuis deux ans chez ces 25-35 ans qui ne veulent pas vieillir. Elle leur rappelle les vacances de leur adolescence, les bons moments de leur jeunesse."

Le sable de Hawaï, le parfum du monoï, et les nu-pieds des surfeurs. Désormais, c'est en ville que l'on se balade en flip-flop en néoprène, avec l'allure d'un roi de la vaguelette en stand-by pour Tarifa. "Tout le monde s'imprègne du mouvement outdoor, explique le styliste de Nelly Rodi. C'est plus de loisirs pour une société qui en demande toujours plus. D'où l'émergence du sport dans la mode."

Reste à bien profiter de ces attachantes petites claquettes, ces rescapées des vacances à Rimini. L'été prochain, les tendanceurs l'assurent, on devrait redécouvrir "la nature, l'enfance et l'innocence". Et marcher pieds nus dans la rue.



L'été de toutes les tongs

BluWin (Suisse)

Pour trotter le jour ou la nuit, les tongs sont les stars des beaux jours. En bois, en cuir vieilli, en soie, avec ou sans perles.... elles osent toutes les audaces.

Des podiums où elles habillent aussi bien les pieds masculins que féminins des tops, les tongs sont descendues dans les rues. D'abord timidement – associées aux vacances et à la plage, elles risquaient de ne pas faire sérieux au bureau – puis avec davantage de détermination. Rien d'étonnant: les tongs d'aujourd'hui, revues et corrigées par les grands noms du luxe, n'ont rien de commun avec les modèles baba cool esprit route des Indes. Originaires d'Asie – au Japon on les appelle geta et l'empereur Hirohito en portait un modèle dont la semelle faisait 30 cm de haut lors de son sacre en 1926 -, les tongs adoptent tous les styles. Minimalistes – Max Mara en propose même une paire, intégrée dans une plaque de plastique mou, que l'on découpe -, en cuir avec une fine lanière, ethno avec des pierres ou – très hype – avec du cristal. C'est l'excellente idée qu'a eu Swarovski en créant des tongs ornées de pierres en cristal. L'actrice Debra Messing, qui interprète Grace Adler dans la série américaine Will and Grace, a déjà craqué. Ce modèle a également été offert à quelques vedettes parmi lesquelles Toni Braxton, Christina Aguilera, Madonna et Faith Hill lors de la soirée des Grammy. Le modèle, baptisé Dasas Flip Flops, est uniquement en vente sur le site Internet www.distinctiveassets.com

Malignes, les tongs trouvent leur place dans toutes les garde-robe. La preuve: les hommes tendance les portent avec un costume! Plus classique chic, les tongs en soie portées avec un pantalon large fluide ou, pour les modèles avec des pierres, avec une jupe longue. A

éviter en ville, la tong en plastique qui donne vite un look négligé.



L'été de tous les pieds

Rafaëlle Germain
La Presse (Montréal)

L'été, pour certaines, est synonyme de mini-jupes, de robes-soleil, et de sangria sur une terrasse. Pour d'autres, été rime carrément, avec pied, parce qu'après huit mois passés confinés dans des bottes trop pointues, nos orteils peuvent enfin être libres ! C'est le temps, donc, de dorloter nos pieds, de leur offrir des pédicures et de les parer des meilleures sandales. Randonnée pédestre.

Cet été les pieds sont partout et au centre de toutes les attentions, parce que les sandales dénudées sont incontournables, avec ou sans talon. La gougoune, joli québécoisisme qui désigne ce que les anglophones appellent les *flip-flops* et les Français des tongs est une des grandes stars du moment. De L.A. à New York, en passant par Montréal et Paris, ces sandales plates minimalistes sont omniprésentes.

" On en voit de plus en plus depuis deux ans, explique Michelle Cowan, acheteuse pour la chaîne Browns. Mais cet été, on peut remarquer qu'il y a les deux extrêmes, avec les *flip-flops* pour le jour, et les talons très hauts, très *sexy* pour le soir. Tout ce qui se noue autour de la cheville est aussi très populaire cet été. Et c'est peut-être ce qui explique le succès des *flip-flops*, le fait qu'on cherche quelque chose de confortable pour se reposer le jour des talons aiguilles du soir. "

Le confort de la gougoune est cependant tout à fait discutable et de très fascinants débats ont lieu actuellement dans les chaumières sur les degrés comparés des douleurs engendrées par les tongs et les talons aiguille.

Personnellement, je ferais des milles en talons hauts plutôt que d'endurer la vicieuse courroie d'une gougoune entre les orteils, mais des hordes de femmes à travers le monde ont l'air on-ne-peut-plus à l'aise avec les leurs.

Gougounes ou talons aiguille?

D'un point de vue médical, talons hauts et formules hyper plates sont tout aussi peu recommandables, nous disent les spécialistes. Si on les écoute, on est mieux de sauter dans d'élégants Birkenstock ou de se précipiter vers la prochaine vente d'Accu-Massages. Ça nous sauverait de bien terribles maux.

" On recommande un maximum d'un pouce et demi pour les talons ", explique le docteur en médecine podiatrique Claude Faucher, qui est aussi administrateur de l'Ordre des podiatres. (La mode actuelle, pour vous donner une idée, est aux talons de 3 à 4 pouces).

" Les talons hauts entraînent un débalancement du pied, parce que tout le poids repose sur l'avant. Il y a aussi une instabilité de la cheville, si le talon est étroit, et une augmentation de la courbe du bas du dos. Ça peut entraîner des maux au cou. Et il y a l'usure du pied, l'écrasement des orteils et la formation de corne et de callosités. Beaucoup de femmes qui ont porté des talons toute leur vie se retrouvent avec des orteils déformés, à cause de l'écrasement, et avec ce qu'on appelle des yeux-de-perdrix, qui est une formation de corne entre les 4e et le 5e orteils ".

Très bien... Et ça ne s'arrange pas si on consulte du côté des médecines douces. " Ça va causer un dérèglement au niveau des énergies ", prévient Germain Ross, professeur de réflexologie chez Kiné-Concept, une école de massage située à Montréal. " Ça crée des désordres, et en compressant des points sur le pied, on peut entraîner des douleurs à certains organes. En déplaçant le poids du corps sur le haut du pied ça crée des douleurs dans le haut de corps, la tête, le cou, les poumons. On devrait toujours marcher à plat sur le sol. Nus pieds, même, si c'était possible ".

La gougoune, qui est toute plate et laisse le pied nu, devrait donc être idéale. Eh bien non. " Elle ne tient pas assez bien au pied, poursuit le docteur Faucher. Elle nous oblige à agripper la courroie avec nos orteils, et ça cause un frottement ". À qui le dit-il !

" Il faut qu'une sandale tienne beaucoup mieux que ça après le pied ", précise le médecin.

La question s'impose donc. Sommes-nous prêtes à sacrifier la santé de nos pieds sur l'impitoyable autel de la beauté? Évidemment, répondront les amoureuses des talons hauts. Et nous serons probablement nombreuses. Selon l'American Podiatric Medical Association (AMPA), 75% des Américains auront au cours de leur vie des problèmes de pieds, dont quatre fois plus de femmes que d'hommes, à cause des talons hauts. On n'aura qu'à rejeter le blâme sur *Sexe à New York* et les Manolo Blahniks de Sarah Jessica Parker. Et pour nous faire pardonner, nous bichonnerons nos pieds plus que jamais, et nous nous ferons croire que nous mêlons l'utile à l'agréable en nous offrant des pédicures.



Histoire de la gougoune

Rafaëlle Germain

La Presse (Montréal)

Gracieux, cool et furieusement branché, le tong, ou flip-flop, est LA chaussure de l'été. On le retrouve accroché aux pieds les plus élégants de la planète (Cameron Diaz, parfaitement décontracté en jupe kaki et en tongs ultra-plats), et dans toutes les boutiques de chaussures. Même The Gap, qui ne vend jamais que des trucs qui ont fait leurs preuves, en a plein. Et il y en a pour tous les goûts, de la sandale fonctionnelle et sportive à la minimaliste très design, en passant par l'ultra-féminine, fleurie et pailletée.

Le concept, pourtant, n'a rien de nouveau, et tout Québécois qui se respecte se souvient de ce que nous avons poétiquement nommé la gougoune, cet accessoire caoutchouteux et balnéaire plutôt navrant. La gougoune mérite tout de même un certain respect, ne serait-ce que parce qu'elle est une des plus vieilles formes de chaussures connues.

" La naissance de la gougoune remonte environ à 3000 ans avant Jésus-Christ " confirme Manon Lareau, enseignante en histoire du costume au Collège Lasalle. " Déjà, les Mésopotamiens fabriquaient des sandales de ce genre, en cuir, avec un talon recouvert ". C'est donc à eux que nous devrions 5000 ans de *flip-flops*?

Difficile à dire. Parce que la technologie ayant abouti à la gougoune n'étant pas des plus sophistiquées, plus d'une civilisation ont été assez vites sur leurs patins pour comprendre qu'une courroie qui passe entre deux orteils et qui s'attache à une semelle est un moyen assez sûr de se couvrir le dessous du pied. On retrouve partout des variations plus ou moins proches du modèle qui est parvenu jusqu'à nous.

Gougoune d'origine asiatique

Cependant, " tout porte à croire que la gougoune est d'origine Asiatique ", explique Manon Lareau. Elle aurait fait les belles années du Moyen-Orient avant que la bonne nouvelle ne se répande dans le reste du continent. " Les matériaux changeaient selon les pays. En cuir, en bois, en papyrus, en paille de riz ". C'est aussi vers 3000 ans avant Jésus-Christ que la gougoune fait son entrée triomphale en Égypte, où elle a connu un gloire jusque là sans pareil.

La reine Égyptienne Hatchepsout (1504-1482 av. JC) a fait de la gougoune, bien avant Cameron Diaz, un accessoire de mode. Les siennes étaient ornées de bijoux, et sa popularité était telle que les sandales en questions sont rapidement devenues tendance chez les nobles Égyptiens.

Ce type de sandale restait évidemment un objet de grand luxe, que l'on fabriquait à partir d'une empreinte de pied dans le sable humide. Du papyrus était ensuite moulé dans l'empreinte, et des courroies en fibre de palmes, tissées dans le papyrus, servaient à retenir à semelle. La courroie passaient entre le gros orteil et son voisin, et allait parfois faire le tour de la cheville. " Souvent, poursuit Mme Lareau, la pointe de la sandale était doucement relevée ", et, dans de très rares cas, couverte d'or fin.

La Grèce antique, grand porteuse de sandale, a aussi fait un usage intense de la gougoune, bien que la version grecque soit moins simple et épurée que celle des Égyptiens. Mais pour retrouver la gougoune à l'état pur, il faut regarder du côté de l'Afrique occidentale (elle a alors de larges bords retournés, pour protéger les ongles peints de ceux qui la portent) et, évidemment, du Japon.

Durant la période Heian, entre 794 et 1192 de notre ère, la folie de la gougoune s'est emparée du Japon, sous deux formes, qui sont encore très répandues aujourd'hui. Le *geta*, avec une semelle de bois posée sur deux autres plaquettes de bois perpendiculaires au sol, a une courroie de tissu et est encore porté par les geishas, et certaines serveuses dans des restaurants japonais trop traditionalistes. Le *zori*, plus confortable, a une semelle de bois ou de paille de riz plate, et une courroie de tissu. On le porte avec des chaussettes blanches qui sont conçues pour isoler le gros orteil.

" Puis la gougoune ancestrale disparaît du monde de la mode entre le Moyen-Âge et le XXe siècle, pour ne réapparaître qu'après la deuxième guerre mondiale, poursuit Mme Lareau. Les raisons possibles pour ce retour sont sans doute les importations grandissantes, dues au fait que les gens voyagent de plus en plus, ou l'occupation américaine de nombreux pays d'outremer, ou encore l'ouverture des frontières aux immigrants vers 1960 ". À partir de là, c'est le règne de la gougoune telle que plusieurs d'entre nous l'ont connue dans notre enfance. " Faite de mousse et de plastique, elles étaient fabriquées en deux morceaux moulés. C'était pratique et pas cher. On en trouve encore des comme ça au Dollarama ".

On était loin des petits tongs en paillettes qui flip-floppent dans les rues de Paris et New York, mais encore plus peut-être des sandales de papyrus de la Reine Hatchepsout. Pourtant le principe est resté le même, depuis plus de 5000 ans. Et qu'elles soient chic ou décontractées, pratiques ou ornementales, il est fort probable que dans un autre 5000 ans, les gougounes et leur bruit inimitable résonneront encore quelque part.







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FLIP, FLOP & FLY. *New*

By Tim Manners

Reveries.com Editor

August 19-23 2002

"They're comfortable, cute and they last forever," says a fashionista of her favorite footwear. She's talking about her Havaianas, as reported by Miriam Jordan and Teri Agins in *The Wall Street Journal* (8/8/02). They cost just \$12 but "Brazil's lowly flip-flops are moving upmarket and going global." They've been around since 1962, "inspired by Japanese peasant-wear" and the basic design hasn't changed since -- a "slab of rubber with a V-shaped strap clenched between the first two toes."

What's changed is the marketing. "There was no universal flip-flop brand," explains Rui Porto, vice president of Sao Paulo Alpargatas SA, makers of the sandals. "Now there is: Havaianas." And they're selling like crazy, apparently even to men: "Last year, Alparagatas sold five million sandals abroad -- up from none a few years ago -- and 120 million pairs in Brazil, twice as many as ten years ago." But despite the broad appeal of the Havaianas, its brand managers say they are being selective, having turned down distribution by Wal-Mart, for example. "Selling Havaianas in mass-market stores would depreciate the value of our brand," says export director Angela Hirata.

Instead, Havaianas are being merchandised alongside designers like Yves Saint Laurent and Chanel in Paris department stores. "Havaianas are for people who have money in their pocket but nothing to prove," says a French distributor. Alpargatas, meanwhile, "is as secretive as Coca-Cola about the formula that makes Havaianas addictive. The combination of natural and synthetic rubber that makes them bouncy, flexible and durable, has been the same for 40 years." A Manhattan shoe store owner says some of her customers buy four or five pair of Havaianas at a time. "People go crazy over these flip-flops," she says.



Denver flipping its toes for flip-flops *New*

By Suzanne Brown
Denver Post Fashion Editor

Thursday, August 15, 2002 --

The image of flip-flops has flip-flopped.

No longer confined to the locker room and shower stall, flip-flops have become the must-have summer footwear among models and fashionistas, worn in European fashion shows and to chic restaurants from LoDo to SoHo. You can still buy zorrises for 79 cents at the drugstore, but it's not hard to find department stores selling some of the trendier designs for \$79.

The Wall Street Journal says New Yorkers and Parisians are flipping for Havaianas, a Brazilian import that's revered for its comfort and easy chic.

Flipfloptrunkshow.com has dozens of styles, in leather and straw as well as rubber.

And now, thanks to a Denver businessman, flip-flops are getting their own holiday.

Chuck Sullivan got Denver Mayor Wellington Webb to decree that Friday be Flip-Flop Friday. Businesses are encouraged to let their employees expose their toes, and an art show will be held at the Wynkoop Brewing Co. It's for a good cause - proceeds from the sale of flip-flop art created by local celebrities, community leaders and creative types will be donated to the Art Students League of Denver.

"Flip-flops are everywhere," says Sullivan, who runs a creative marketing agency. "I was thinking there was something fun to do with them in August in Denver. Businesses could do something that doesn't cost them any money or time, and people would have something to stay downtown for on a Friday night."

Sullivan says he has had inquiries from First National Bank, US Bank and AT&T Broadband about participating, but he's not sure how many businesses will allow employees to wear flip-flops tomorrow.



Brazilian Havaianas Reaches The Runway and the Subway *New*

By MIRIAM JORDAN and TERI AGINS
Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

08.13.2002

Holly Pope boasts a closet full of shoes and sandals that cost upward of \$300 a pair. But the Malibu, Calif., jewelry wholesaler prefers her new \$12 flip-flops from Brazil.

"I wear them everywhere," says Ms. Pope, 36 years old, as she wiggles her toes in coral thongs, one of her eight pairs of Havaianas. "They're comfortable, cute and they last forever."

In New York, Heather Strekal, 27, wears Havaianas (pronounced ah-vai-YAH-nas) with fancy dresses to restaurants, and slips them on each day for her subway commute to an investment bank. "I wish I could wear them in the office," says Ms. Strekal, who has bought three pairs this year at a SoHo boutique.

Named by Cosmopolitan and Elle as one of summer's hottest items, Brazil's lowly flip-flops are moving upmarket and going global. They are selling well in Paris and Sydney. Ukrainians wear them year-round -- with socks -- prompting European distributors to propose a winter model fitted with a sock.

The success is a feat for footwear that gave rise in Brazil to the expression *pe de chinelo*, or "slipper foot," slang for downtrodden. For years, the Brazilian government lumped the flip-flops together with milk, bread and beans, in a basket of staples used to calculate the basic cost of living. Today the main buyers of Havaianas, which cost \$2 a pair in Brazil, remain coffee-bean pickers, stevedores and other blue-collar

workers.

Havaianas made their debut in 1962, inspired by Japanese peasant-wear. The name, Portuguese for Hawaiians, was a tribute to America's glamorous holiday destination. The basic design hasn't changed much over the years. What has changed is the new international appeal. "There was no universal flip-flop brand," says Rui Porto, vice president of Sao Paulo Alpargatas SA, the Sao Paulo sporting-goods and industrial-fabric company that makes the sandals. "Now there is: Havaianas."

Havaianas owe their boom partly to free publicity from devotees such as supermodels Naomi Campbell, Kate Moss and Brazil's own Gisele Bundchen. Company representatives stood next to big-name designers such as Dolce & Gabbana and handed out sandals to stars at the Cannes Film Festival.

They are also benefiting from a general surge in the popularity of thongs. Flip-flops have come out of the shower stall and onto the streets of New York, Paris and Milan. This summer, they are the preferred sandal, with various designer thongs for sale at Saks Fifth Avenue, Bergdorf Goodman and Nordstrom.

The current craze extends beyond fashion-conscious women. Men are switching over to flip-flops. So are high-school students, as some principals repeal bans on the noisy and not overly protective footwear. The slab of rubber with a V-shaped strap clenched between the first two toes, typified by Havaianas, is the ultimate casual sandal, marking a trend where common-sense comfort meets cheap chic.

Meanwhile, Havaianas are selling well in Paris at the Galleries Lafayette department store near designers Yves Saint Laurent and Chanel. Last month, 50 models paraded in Havaianas at Jean Paul Gaultier's Paris fashion show. Havaianas are now offered in stores in 50 countries, most of which had never carried flip-flops.

"C'est cool!" says Emmanuel Busquet, a French distributor, who expects to sell 50,000 pairs this year.

"Havaianas are for people who have money in their pocket but nothing to prove."

Alpargatas is as secretive as Coca-Cola about the formula that makes Havaianas addictive. The combination of natural and synthetic rubber that makes them bouncy, flexible and durable, has been the same for 40 years.



Flipping over flip-flops

BY JENICE M. ARMSTRONG

Philadelphia Daily News



Posted on Thu, Jul. 11, 2002

Dime-store beach sandals have been gussied up to go everywhere.

FLIP-FLOPS, those unpretentious beach staples, have emerged from the back of America's overstuffed closet

to the forefront of fashion this summer.

Today's flip-flops come in all kinds of prints - tropical, psychedelic, animal and geometric prints.

They're covered with denim, suede or other fabrics, and are adorned with everything from seashells and fake flowers to Swarovski crystals - Saks Fifth Avenue has a black pair with the popular crystal trim for \$155.

One thing that hasn't changed is the basic makeup of the shoe. Flip-flops are sandals with a strap that fits between the first and second toes.

"They really did originate in China," said Jackie Robbins, co-president of www.flipfloptrunkshow.com. "They were named flip-flops because of the sounds they make when you walk in them. They literally 'flip, flop' on the ground."

Over the years, the sandals have also flip-flopped in and out of fashion. This latest resurgence began in the late 1990s, at the same time that American women began indulging more in professional pedicures and looking for ways to show off their feet.

Among the high-end fashion designers selling flip-flops these days are Chanel - its \$405 pair sports the double C logo, of course - Kate Spade and Gucci.

"Sex and the City" star Sarah Jessica Parker reportedly is a big fan of Lady Lanell flip-flops and has a pair in every color.

Mella makes a terry cloth style that model Ines Rivera gave as bridesmaids' gifts at her island wedding.

Flip-flops, which sell for as little as \$1, are easily had at places such as Old Navy, Payless and some dollar stores. Some clever folk get plain ones and decorate them. Go ahead and invest in a few pair; fashion watchers say flip-flops are here to stay.

"They're easy. They fit well. They give you a little more grip than a slide," said Tes Jennings, manager of Mainly Shoes in Manayunk. "They're too easy [to wear] to go out of style."



Flip-flops back on top

By Mydria Clark
Seattle Times

June 27, 2002

Toss out those Birkenstocks. There's a new shoe in town.

With the advent of summer and (hopefully) warmer weather, consumers are getting ready to bare their toes. But before you go out and buy a new pair of the same old sandals, take a look at summer's new shoe trend - the thong.

Also called flip-flops, thong sandals are becoming a leading choice for the summer. They're simple. They're comfortable. And they "let your feet breathe," said Ben Cushing, 29, of Renton, Wash.

As with most fashion trends, what goes around comes around, and thong sandals are no exception.

"I remember wearing them back when I was a teen-ager," said Annette Smith, 50, of Seattle, eyeing a pair of casual Anne Klein thongs at Nordstrom.

This summer, teen-agers and adults alike have caught "flip-flop fever," and with prices as low as 99 cents at some stores, are purchasing several pairs - some with sequins or braided leather and others with buckles or wooden wedge heels. Stores are carrying more styles of thong sandals than in past years, an increase due to a move toward casualness, buyers say.

"As the workplace becomes more casual, everyday weekend wear has to become even more casual," said Meg Rottman, spokeswoman for the World Shoe Association.

People also want something that's easy, offers a lot of variety and is inexpensive, Rottman said. By customers' responses, it's clear that thong sandals fit the bill.

Shoe shoppers said they like the versatility and variety offered with this summer's new fashion trend in footwear. Leslie-Ann Holt, 21, said she likes how thongs can match any outfit. She wears her classic black rubber flip-flops from J. Crew (\$12) with many outfits, whether she's dressing up or dressing down.

"Since they are inexpensive, people can buy different colors for a variety of outfits," said Mary Tilly, junior shoe buyer at The Bon Marche, where classic rubber flip-flops range from \$19.99 to \$29.99.

Flip-flops are definitely a trend for younger girls, who like chunky platform heels and lots of funky prints and sparkles on their shoes, Tilly said.

"In recent years, we have seen a broader selection of thong sandals from the casual 'flip-flop' to athletic styles to elegant evening wear, with many variations in between," said Denise Smith, Washington/Alaska BP shoe buyer for Nordstrom.

Nordstrom carries more than 80 varieties this year, which is much larger than last year's selection, said Kylie Allensworth, a company spokeswoman.

"There's nowhere I can't wear my flip-flops," said Tami Brockway, 28, of Seattle. Thong sandals have been seen at work, in parks and at fancy ceremonies.

Shoe designer Tommy Bahama even offers men a two-toned brown leather and suede thong-toed sandal they can play golf in and go out to dinner in. (Nordstrom, \$64.95).

For the the casual consumer: Report's canvas shoe-like thong, designed with stripes on the side and tread on the sole (Nordstrom, \$24.95), and Old Navy's stars-and-stripes-imprinted flip flop, \$5.

Women willing to spend a lot more money may opt for Giuseppe Zanotti's \$415 pair of golden-beaded thong sandals to match an elegant evening gown for a special occasion.

But don't worry - you don't have to be a big spender to afford a trendy look. You can find a good, inexpensive pair of classic flip-flops at Old Navy (\$3.50) or Payless Shoes (\$9.99).



Flip. Flop... need I say more?

By Winston Hall

Angelo.edu

Spring break, warm temperatures, sunshine and longer days are all basically designed to bring about one thing: flip-flops. That's correct. With the birth of spring comes the resurgence of the flip-flop. Anywhere on campus, if you pause and partake of the sounds, you can hear the whimsical pitter-patter of these wonderful warm-weather accessories. But, you cannot fully appreciate the uncluttered elegance of flip-flops without delving headfirst into the reasons behind their existence as well as the perils and bonuses of being the proud owner of some.

Flip-flops were invented in 1956 by brothers George and Ira Flop. The brothers were inspired late one spring afternoon while frolicking on the beach. According the history books, Ira Flop, irritated by the complexity of everyday footwear, was motivated to find a new and unique way to protect his feet without housing them in confining things such as socks or loafers. He and George threw some ideas around and eventually the two inventors came up with the revolutionary idea of placing the support strap from a piece of foam BETWEEN the first two toes on your feet then having it loop loosely around the foot and connect again with the foam. The lax nature of this restraint allowed pedal freedom unparalleled in modern times. The brothers knew what they had was gold, so they began marketing their invention immediately.

Initially, flip-flops were seen as unacceptable in public. They were labeled lude, vulgar, and even "the devil's own handiwork." Eventually, the free-spirited beachcombers of the West Coast discovered flip-flops. From there their popularity mushroomed. In the late 70's, college students all around the nation discovered that by wearing flip-flops to class, they could conceivably gain 4-7 more minutes of sleep. Because of this, flip-flops have become a mainstay on the college scene.

You might ask yourself if there are any dangers in owning a pair of flip-flops. The answer may surprise you. According to a recent study by Reginald and Walker Research Firm, an astounding 78.9 % of America's college students have experienced the socially demoralizing problem of "falling out" of their flip-flops. This has become a chronic problem in the past ten years. I can even vouch for this one on a personal level. Last week, while ascending the stairs in the Academic Building, I, too, fell out of my flip-flops. Had this occurred on level land, I might have been okay, but the fact is, I was on a series of progressive 90 degree angles in a pair of flip-flops. As my ability to balance lessened with every second, I knew something must be done to prevent disaster. In both a literal and figurative attempt to save face, I quickly shoved both feet forward. While this did prevent me from falling up the stairs it also caused me to do something that, since the invention of the foot, has never been documented. I somehow managed to stub all ten of my toes simultaneously. Eyewitnesses to this event were astounded that I could contort my feet to such an angle that this was physically possible. It did happen and I have the limp to prove it.

However, I was not deterred by this unfortunate incident simply because there are also many advantages to owning a pair of flip-flops. When considering the immense amount of responsibility that goes into the ownership of anything, the first thing you must consider is the price. Flip-flops, including original cost and maintenance, are actually cheaper than the average taco. In fact, flip-flops are SO cheap that, in many circles, they are considered disposable. In addition, flip-flops allow you to go weeks without washing socks. The end result: flip-flops save money as well as useless wear and tear on your washer and dryer. Perhaps one of the

most overlooked qualities of a flip-flop is that they always match. How many times have you ever heard the phrase, "That shirt clashes with your flip-flops?" I have never heard this. Flip-flops will never make an outfit mismatched. They will simply make it eclectic.

If you are debating whether or not flip-flops are in your future, you should probably just go ahead and buy some. Perhaps you aren't ready to sink money into a pair of flip-flops just yet. That's okay, too. Just take a set out for a test-flop. If anything, you will gain appreciation for all the other flip-flopper folks out there. (For you English buffs out there, I just instantaneously morphed the word flip-flop into an adjective.) However, there is no hurry. The flip-flop, a symbolic representation of American ideals, is not going away anytime soon. Appreciate what they stand for and why they exist. If you can understand these, nothing can stop you. So go to the nearest thrift store and start flopping today!



Shoppers flip over fun summer shoe fashions

By JENNI ROBERSON
The Tech Talk Online

People of all ages are letting go of their inhibitions and daring to bare : their toes, that is.

Flip-flops, comically named by the persistent thumping noise they make when walking, dominate the shoe industry during the spring and summer months.

They seem to be sold everywhere, ranging in prices from \$1 to \$20 or more.

People just cannot seem to get enough of these shoes.

A shopper can find them virtually anywhere, from discount to department stores.

In Wal-Mart they hang from shelves in a colorful array of plastics.

Whatever color is desired, the chance of finding it is good.

Flip-flops top tables at stores such as Gap, Abercrombie and Fitch, Old Navy, American Eagle and many more.

The question may spring to mind, "Why do people like flip-flops so much?"

Just what is so appealing about a shoe that wedges a thong in between the toes and exposes the foot, one of the least attractive parts of the body, all the while making a constant thumping noise?

Flip-flops seem to be especially popular among college students who strive for easy living despite hectic schedules.

Ashley Moody, a sophomore animal biology major, said she thinks that flip-flops are the perfect shoe for a girl on the go.

"I like them because they are easy to take off or slip on, especially when you are running late for class," Moody said.

Moody said the low cost of most flip-flops also make the shoes so well liked.

"They are fun and cheap," Moody said.

"You can buy 20 pairs for the price of one shoe."

Lee Nesmith, a sophomore speech major, said she shares Moody's opinion on why these shoes are so popular.

"My favorite pair of flip-flops is a cheap pair of Lagunas from Wal-Mart," Nesmith said.

"They are navy blue. I wear them because they are comfortable, and I am too lazy to put on socks and shoes. They are stylish too."

These thong shoes come in a variety of styles.

Flip-flops come with leather straps, fabric straps, solid plastic straps and an innumerable amount of other styles, all sold in practically every color of the rainbow.

Laura Jo Caldwell, a sophomore animal biology major, said she enjoys the availability of flip-flops in such a wide variety of colors and styles.

"I have a lot of flip-flops, all in different colors," Caldwell said.

"I love that, because I always have a different color to match my outfit. And I'm all about matching. Not matching is not cool."

Flip-flops have had a major boost in popularity since they were first introduced.

They are not just for the beach and the pool anymore.

Jennifer Dust, a sophomore animal biology major, likes to wear flip-flops every chance she gets.

"Flip-flops create an extremely diverse wardrobe," Dust said.

"I can wear them with skirts, pants, capris or shorts.

"I wear them to class, church, to the pool and even in the shower."

Ashley Newton, a sophomore animal biology major, said she feels excited when the weather is warm enough for her to wear flip-flops.

"I like flip-flops because they don't have a big heel," Newton said.

"I like the flat ones, not the platforms, because they don't add any height. I'm tall, and I like shoes that add as little height as possible."

Chris Hanchey, a senior speech major, said he enjoys wearing these shoes despite the little problems they sometimes cause.

"A new pair that is not molded to your foot sometimes causes blisters, but a good pair of flip-flops can be your best friend," Hanchey said.

"It is shaped for you and your foot alone, and no matter how bad you treat it, it will still fit your foot."

Camille Comer, a sophomore animal science major, said she is often teased about her addiction to flip-flops.

"I own about 10 pairs of flip-flops," Comer said.

"But I can never have too many.

"I buy another pair every time I go to Wal-Mart."

Whatever their reason for wearing them, the majority of consumers just love flip-flops.

These shoes are one trend that will most likely be around for a while.

People have just flipped over them, and stores are seizing the opportunity, knowing that it is one investment that will not flop.



Flip-Flops Go upscale

June 12, 2002

By JEAN PATTESON, Special to The Courant

Flip-flops are like dirty gym shoes, says footwear designer Donald J. Pliner.

"They're not the nicest-looking things, but they're so easy to wear, so comfortable. You don't have to think about it. You just slip your feet into them and go," he says.

"Basically, people are lazy. No wonder flip-flops are popular."

The casual rubber slip-ons, so suited to beachside living, have always been a favorite of sand-and-sea communities. But flip-flops have moved way beyond casual in recent seasons - particularly the women's styles. And they're no longer made just of rubber.

Now they come in leather, denim or rope, with heels or platform soles, and decorated with buckles, sequins or crystals. Everyone from the Gap to Banana Republic to Chanel has flip-flops for summer.

The single, identifying feature that remains unchanged is the double strap that comes between the first and second toes. That thong is what separates flip-flops (no matter how embellished) from all other sandals.

Flip-flops are not the invention of American surf shops, although their association with those establishments might lead to that conclusion. Rather, they are copied from Japanese zori - sandals made with sponge-rubber soles and a thong between the first two toes.

It was back in the late 1990s that flip-flops made the leap from beach to city sidewalk, says Jen Mooney, fashion editor at Footwear News, a trade publication.

"In New York a few years ago, everyone started wearing cheap rubber flip-flops. They look great; they're easy to wear; they're really inexpensive - so why not? They became a huge trend overnight," she says.

Designers took note and for a couple of seasons sent their models down the runway wearing flip-flops - even with ball gowns.

"They give an outfit a funky edge, a certain attitude: casual but chic," says Mooney. "Almost every company does them now."

That includes such style leaders as Ferragamo, Prada and Gucci and trendy newcomers such as Kate Spade, Faryl Robin and Lisa Nadine. Even Chanel has put its famous double C's on flip-flops, which sell for a cool \$405.

With such a high-priced stamp of approval, there's no doubt about it: The humble beach thong has morphed into a high-fashion phenomenon.

Pliner designs flip-flops with supportive orthotic footbeds, platform soles, 2-inch hourglass heels and straps of brightly colored suede or metallic leather.

They're beautiful and sensuous, he says. And they go with everything.

"Flip-flops are the easiest solution to summer footwear."



Fashion-savvy flip for flip-flops

By Marilyn Johnson
Cox News Service
Published June 12, 2002

ATLANTA -- When actress Talisa Soto married screen hunk Benjamin Bratt in April, she wore an off-the-rack satin-chiffon dress and . . . flip-flops.

Not many of us would pair--much less wear--such casual footwear with a wedding gown. For years, these sandals--also called thongs--were cut from rubber and worn at the beach, in showers or around swimming pools. Now flip-flops have gone upscale and are afoot at parties as well as casual picnics, some workplaces--and weddings.

"People love flip-flops because they are fun, comfortable to wear and relatively inexpensive," said Jackie Robbins, who with two partners runs the Web site www.flipfloptrunkshow.com. "And fashion in general has become more casual, more laid-back." Prices for flip-flops can range from \$3 for plain styles at drugstores and mass merchandisers to about \$55 for more elaborate leather numbers in department stores.

These cute summer styles come in leather, plastic, denim, cotton and suede as well as patent and, of course, rubber. The name says it all. The sandals flip up and then flop back on the ground when you walk, thus making a distinctive sound.

Look for them adorned with sequins, flowers and boldly colored jewels; stenciled with Hawaiian prints and patriotic designs; and even trimmed with gingham and ribbon.

Flip-flops fit into the backless-sandal category and usually are secured on the foot by a thong between the first two toes. While most have flat heels, some styles have curvy heels or wedge-type heels, favored today by teens.

Meg Rottman, spokeswoman for the footwear trade show, World Shoe Association, says that flip-flops have been around since the late '40s.

"Women only started to wear open-toe footwear about 1934," she said. "Then sandals became popular, in leather and rubber, and the flip-flop evolved from the T-strap on a shoe."

If you are going to wear trendy flip-flops, make certain your toenails are buffed and polished with a pretty summer shade.

"Women spend lots of time and money on pedicures," said online boutique owner Robbins. "They want sandals that will show off their well-polished toenails. Flip-flops fill the bill."

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Fantastic Flip-Flops



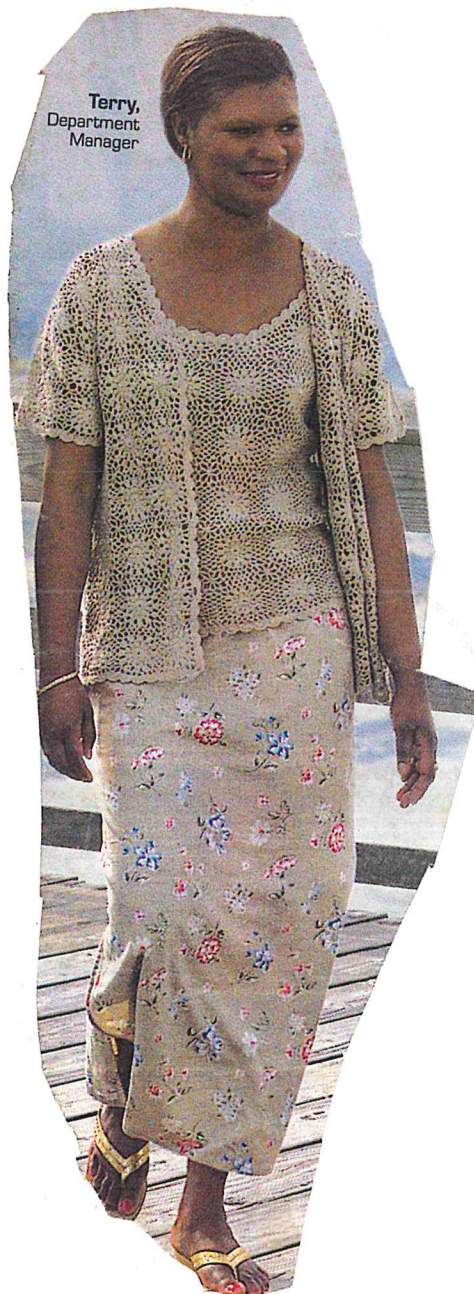
Flip. Flop.

Flip.

Flop.

The rhythmic "flip-flop" of barely-there sandals slapping against the bottom of students' feet has been echoing throughout campus ever since the weather warmed up.

Flip-flops have been invading closets this season, successfully making a transition from a shower shoe and beachwear to versatile footwear appropriate for many occasions. Although



This is **Terry**, an amateur model posing in **yellow** flip-flops. Terry was a **Wal-Mart** store employee, supposedly in the United States, when this photo was taken back in 2001--before September 11! (It also may have been taken in 2000--early in the 21st century!)

they have been around for decades, this season, they're flipping and flopping against the feet of anyone who wants to show some toe.

"They're the most common shoe style in the world because you can find them anywhere in the world because they're really inexpensive," said Laura Kidd, assistant professor of fashion design. "They're popular now because they're fun to wear and they're cheap."

Katy Fortune, a junior in philosophy from Oklahoma City, Okla., sports one of three pairs of flip-flops as soon as the weather warms up each year. She sticks to basic colored flip-flops, like the black faux leather ones she wore Tuesday, and prefers thick soles.

"I don't really like the ones that are bright, colorful and flowery," Fortune said. "I like the ones that are subdued. It's not a fashion statement."

Kidd said that while flip flops have been available at the five and dime for as long as she can remember, they are now flooding the shelves of clothing and shoe stores because designers have deemed them the latest trend. Designers have



Japanese model **Yuria** (whose picture comes from the website **amazonsin [-] thongs.com**) pictured in **white** flip-flops and a printed **red** sundress, perhaps in 2001 or early 2002

doctored the traditional foam rubber flip flops and now make the sandals out of several materials, including leather and plastic, and they come in numerous colors, patterns and textures.

Rachel Berg, a junior in sports medicine from Chicago, purchased her blue foam flip-flops at the Gap last summer to add to her collection of red, black and green pairs. Berg avoids wearing her flip-flops when she's playing sports but loves flipping and flopping up and down stairs to annoy people.

"They're easy to get in and out of, and you don't have to tie your shoes," Berg said.

The flip-flop hails from Asia, according to Kidd, who said they were made out of rubber from rubber plantations and were later made out of old service tires from World War II vehicles. The modern version of the flip-flop stems from the Japanese zori sandals. Kidd said they made their way to the United States around the late 1940s and have since been sold at every five and dime around the country. They were inexpensive sandals that were perfect for the beach or to wear



Here is a picture of model **Ariel**, which was taken from this website: **extremefeet.com**. Ariel is wearing a **white** spaghetti-strap tank top, **navy blue** shorts, and **tan-colored** flip-flops. She may become more popular in 2004!

in the rain.

Kidd said juvenile styles are usually popular among college students because they like to revert back to being a child.

"If flip-flops do remind them of being young, it would be a way for them to reach back to their childhood," Kidd said.

Fortune remembers wearing flip-flops since she was 5 years old. She said the summers were hot in Oklahoma, and flip-flops were the best way to let her feet breathe. She said the only downfall to the cheap sandals are that she can't wear them when she drives her manual car because it's too tough to drive. She also doesn't always enjoy being the center of attention when she's walking in a quiet room.

"When I'm climbing up the stairs in Faner Hall, it's like a gun shot going off," Fortune said.

Ronnie Hauptmann, a senior in public relations from Carrier Mills, bought his blue flip-flops with black straps last week. He wanted a pair he could wear outside of the shower. Since he's been wearing his new pair out and about



more, he has had to get used to the strap rubbing between his toes. Although the constant flip-flop noise sometimes gets on Hauptmann's nerves, he said the sandals are pretty versatile.

"I think flip-flops are more casual," Hauptmann said. "If someone was dressing really nice, it wouldn't go with the attire - it would be a fashion faux pas."

Kidd agrees that flip-flops can go with most outfits but probably shouldn't be worn with nice clothes. Still, with the variety of styles in stores, she said there are probably some flip-flops that could go with anything.

"You get a lot of bang for your buck in flip-flops because you can buy them in any color, and you can't just buy a bunch of shoes in different colors," Kidd said. "You don't want to wear them anywhere when you have to be quiet."

Reporter Ginny Skalski can be reached at gskalski@dailyegyptian.com

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Flip-flop Phenomenon

Doctors say they can be dangerous, students say they are fashionable. Either way, they are everywhere.

By Lauren Acerra (Daily Texan Staff)

May 08, 2002

Every year when spring rolls around, students hear more and more clicks of flip-flops as they go to class. Whether used to walk around campus or as shower shoes, they are everywhere. On the walls of such stores such as Tyler's or Old Navy, a person can walk in and see an array of colorful footwear displayed. Even though they have been around for the last 30 years, it is over the past several years where these flimsy shoes have grown in popularity again.

Some people in the medical community, however, said wearing these shoes can cause both harmful short- and long-term effects.

Brian Beard, a certified advanced rolfer, described the process of how the flip-flop can affect the body. Rolfing, which Beard practices at the Academy of Oriental Medicine, is a service mark used for a technique of deep muscular manipulation and massage for the relief of bodily and emotional tension.

"When people have to scrunch their toes [while wearing flip-flops], muscles that operate the toes attach to bones of the leg," Beard said. "They contract to the knee, which puts strain from the knee to the lower pelvis. That puts undue strain on the lower back."

These stresses on the back do not happen to everyone, and if they do, the stress could happen by the end of the day or even by the end of the week, Beard said. But some students said they would still wear their flip-flops despite the potential dangers.

"[The flip-flops] don't affect me, and I already have a bad lower back, so it doesn't matter," said Stephanie Young, a psychology senior.

Beard said wearing flip-flops for an extended period of time could create damage.

"If you repeat the pattern that has strain over years and years, eventually it would look like you are walking around in flip-flops [when you're not wearing them]," he said.

Finding a variety of flip-flops is easy, with stores like Tyler's on the Drag selling over 120 styles, said Chris Fillion, Tyler's manager. Many said much of the appeal of flip-flops is due to the convenience of wearing the shoes.

"There's no shoe laces, no socks, no tying," Young said. "It's just sit up and go. When you first put them on in the spring, they are cool so you are not as hot as opposed to tennis shoes."

Sarah Diener, manager of Tyler's, said her favorite shoes are her flip-flops.

"I would live in them if I could, even in the winter," she said.

Rebekah Johnson, an English freshman, said there are numerous reasons she enjoys wearing flip-flops.

"I have two pairs right now, and I will probably get more in the summer," Johnson said. "A pair doesn't go with every outfit so I'll have to go out and buy more. I can dress flip-flops up with different things, they're not too heavy [compared to sandals] and it's really, really hot, so it feels good around my feet."

Many males have a different view on flip-flops, and the selection at stores for men is smaller than for women.

"I usually wear them because it is hot," said Farid Dehghan, an undeclared sophomore. "I see them as more of a convenience because if I am late to class, I don't have to worry about putting my shoes and socks on."

With so many people going around campus in flip-flops, there are still many people who opt not to wear them.

"I tend to wear my tennis shoes a lot more," said Kelly Steinhebel, a business sophomore. "It's a tendency I've had. The padding makes them more comfortable and easier to walk around campus in."

Others said they avoided flip-flops because they found them uncomfortable.

"I don't wear them because of the annoying thing between my toes," said Carty Weller, a chemical engineering sophomore.

Jennifer Polka, a textiles and apparel freshman, said flip-flops have become popular because of their versatility.

"You could wear it with your skirt, jeans, shorts or basically anything and it will look really good," said Polka, a member of the University Fashion Group. "[Unlike sandals], flip-flops can go with anything."



Flip-Flops : a lifestyle

An example of Zen simplicity run amok, flip-flops have taken an ancient Asian slipper and put them on beach feet as a Design and Business Classic.

When it comes to footwear, what could be simpler than a flat sheet of rubber or plastic with a V-shaped thong? Flip-flops are a tribute to minimalism.

This popular summer sandal fulfills its purpose in the most practical and unpretentious way. It protects the soles, lets the feet breathe naturally without sweating, and can be worn in water or on land.

The forerunner of flip-flops can be traced back to Asia, where zori sandals have been worn in Japan for well over twelve hundred years. Easy to slip on and off, zoris suited the Japanese custom of removing one's shoes before entering a home. Traditional Japanese zoris are made from tightly woven straw or reeds with a cloth

thong and worn with a cotton tabi, a "mitten-like" sock with the big toe separated from the other toes, matching exactly how the toes are divided by the thong.

The thousands of Japanese who immigrated to Hawaii at the start of the twentieth century to work in the sugar cane fields introduced the tropical island to this style of footwear. Hawaiians still refer to flip-flops as zoris or "slippahs" (a Japan-ized term for slippers).

But it wasn't until zoris were produced from rubber or plastic after World War II that they found mass appeal in the U.S. Some sources suggest that the idea to use rubber instead of straw came from Japanese soldiers posted in the steaming jungle who improvised using old tire casings for the soles. Commercial possibilities as beach wear began to be realized in the 1950s, when such rubber sandals were playfully named "flip-flops" and produced in flamboyant colors to appeal to the youth market. Cheap, casual and convenient, flip-flops quickly caught on with surfers and vacation crowds. Today flip-flops are a ubiquitous sign of summer.



Anyone that knows me could tell you that I'm not the most conventional person. I like to think of myself as a 'creek' person ... just a little bit out of the 'main stream'.

And one of the conventions of modern Western culture that most perturbs me is shoes. As a basketball player, I understand that footwear has a practical function – my feet just don't like them (not to mention socks !).

Growing up in Southern California, it was never really an issue. My brothers and I *always* ran around barefoot ; we climbed trees, rode bikes and played hoops – all with no shoes. Sure, we stepped on the occasional rusty nail, but a tetanus shot never hurt anybody. According to my Dad, it just "weeds out all the lockjaw wimps of the world. "

As I got older and had to go to more and more of the "fancy" places that required shoes, like school, the obvious solution was flip-flops. I've been wearing them ever since. Wherever I've gone, the flip-flops have been ever-present staple of my wardrobe. In Stanford, Spain, Italy, the less-than-pristine streets and subways of NYC and, of course, the precipitationally-prone city of Portland, flip-flops are my mainstay.

So my recommendation for this week is the **only** brand of Flip-flops I will ever wear.

Rainbow Sandals.

Rarely a day goes by when I don't put on my Rainbows. They are the best ! They're made by hand, right here in the USA, by some laid-back dudes who live in San Clemente. Their classic original model is all leather, they mold right to your feet and become more and more comfortable the longer you have wear them. I've had mine for about four years, but I know people in their 30s who've been wearing the same pair of Rainbows since they were 15.

Vanessa Nygaard



Surely you are aware what flip-flops are! Those inexpensive, multi-coloured footwear (e.g. Trail) that are invading your shoe racks, in place of your painful heels or boring track shoes. Rain or shine, it appears that numerous individuals are sporting these glaringly coloured slippers. Although flip-flops are perceived to be tacky and sloppy by a number of meticulously (perhaps overly) dressed (read: vain) Bizaders, I proudly claim to be, with several of my shorts-wearing-flip-flops-flaunting friends to be avid supporters. The aesthetic attractiveness of multitudinous shades as well as the affordable prices of flip-flops has resulted in their emergence as the choice footwear of many. But its magnetism is beyond that of visual pleasure, and is a lifestyle definition in itself.

The "flip flop culture", so to speak, is a reflection of our ideologies and contempt against our entrapment between adulthood and adolescence. Embodied within the flip-flop is the "devil-may-care" attitude adopted by our generation and it also reflects the defiant flouting of organizational regulations (You DO know that flip-flops and such slippers are not allowed right?). The trading of shoes for a more comfortable and casual alternative hints at the undercurrent of youthful angst, the desire to disintegrate all constraints and be who we want to be. How can the simple flip-flop contain such idealism? The same way that you stay out just a little past your curfew to test your parents' tolerance. The same way that we seek to identify ourselves with people around us and befriend them. Through the seemingly irreverence that we indulge in, we reveal our unconscious inclinations. In this very same way, we choose a relatively safe method to shed our inhibitions and facades, to be in a tiny way, our casual selves.

An individual's footwear definitely seeks to portray the image they wish to project to the world. Platforms _ the illusion of height (No offense, my dear friends). High heels _ sultriness and a mature sensuality (Or to get into clubs with age minimums). Leather shoes _ "I-am-classy-and-if-you-don't-believe-me-just-look-at-my-shoes!" (Or it could mean that the chap has a presentation that day). The flip-flops _ au naturel. The vision of naked feet flimsily held onto thin soles by a single strap. It is as bare as feet can get in public. And no, the wearer is not trying to transmit an image of nudity, but of Spartan simplicity. In most cases, the footwear serves as a complement to one's attire. Although not going so far as to don togas, casual wear such as shorts and T-shirts would be synonymous with the image flip-flop supporters try to portray. A laissez faire movement is re-emerging into the foreground through the flip-flop medium. Instead of conforming to the norms and lose our individuality, we seek to enforce our rights as simple, idealistic young adults, and be ourselves, even in a minute way.

So for those who scorn and scoff the supposed scruffiness of flip-flop wearing individuals, here's some food for thought. Don't you secretly envy the "as-you-like-it" confidence of the people you deem underdressed? Can you attain an equal level of comfort without the armor of clothes meant to improve your perception of yourself?

Conclusively, I do not deny the existence of fashion victims in the wake of the Jap-beach culture, but at the same time, flip-flops could very well be an expression of something more profound.

Daphne Liu



Dee Levine has a thing for thongs.

No, not *that* kind of thong.

The kind you wear on your feet.

Mrs. Levine, who co-owns The Playground bar with her husband, Scott, has at least six pairs of flip-flops.

"I've tried to get Scott to wear them, too," said Mrs. Levine, who wears her simple slip-ons practically every night. "I told him you just feel more free and have more energy."

The flip-flop, a descendant of the Japanese zori sandal, freed our feet from socks and shoes decades ago. While its cousin the mule has been popular for years, the flip-flop has enjoyed a lower profile as pool, beach and shower shoe.

But this summer, flip-flop fever hit and styles exploded.

Bohemian flip-flops with beads, butterflies and flowers.

Foxy flip-flops with rhinestone studs and snake-skin finishes.

Soles that are as thick as bricks but as soft as cushions.

From \$3 to \$300. From dime stores to designer boutiques. Suddenly it seems, flip-flops are everywhere.

"People are wearing them fancy, out at night or to a party in the Hamptons with a pretty sundress," said Bree Gelber, accessories editor of *Seventeen* magazine. "You can even wear dirt cheap, Wal-Mart flip-flops with a cute pair of pants or a hippie skirt."

People find them comfortable, Ms. Gelber said.

"Flip-flops are carefree and easy," said Jamie Whitfield, a sales associate in the Women's Shoe Department at Dillard's. "Women like them because you can just slip them on and go."

Jennifer Hilliard



Man. Do I love some trash shoes.

I don't know why, either. It's not like I have some phobia of having my toes shut in, laced up, and kept in the confines of a nice pair of sneakers all day. In fact, I like the feeling of taking my shoes off after a day spent on my feet.

Don't look at me like that.

You don't have to be my friend. I promise.

So what is this obsession with flip-flops? I haven't fallen this hard-core for footwear since jellies, and there's a whole different painful story that will, I repeat, will be told some other time. I just can't get enough of these things. Old Navy has become my illegal black market supplier, 3.50 for a pair of bright, two-tone platform ones. The salesclerks looked at me like I was insane, until one guy who was fat and looked like Alvin (THAT Alvin) turned to me and lisped "You know, you can buy more than one pair, we won't get mad or anything."

"Or anything." Like there was something else they would do to people like me. I wanted to shout something after him, like "You probably couldn't fit into your car the first time you drove it," but I just wanted my flip-flops.

They are the stupidest shoe ever invented. They have no use. Other than to make me feel good. I have this pair of melon plastic flip-flops from Old Navy, and I feel so groovy every time I slip them on. Something about the feeling of the base slapping against your heel when you walk. And the look on your friend's faces when you're in a store and you make that sound every time you take a step, on the linoleum floor.

Flip-flops bring joy, to you and meeeeeeeeeeee.

So what, short girl likes herself some trailer park shoes, you're saying. No. You don't understand. You need to call Ricky Lake and break out the hair extensions because I wore the same pair of bamboo platform flip-flops, the ones with the black suede chunky sole and straps, all year last year. I mean to every, every event I could get away with. I think after awhile, people thought they were my only shoes. So wrong.

"Ricky, Ohmahgod guuuuuuuuurl, she's just...I mean, she look good, she look good, but she just...ohmahgod, you gotta see these...look at this Ricky! LOOK AT THIS!"

"Why do you HURT ME LIKE THIS!"

Then one day the strap snapped. 8.99 at Rite-Aid down the drain. I was so mad. I tried re-connecting it with nail-glue, but it kept snapping every time I did a kick-jump to "Baby One More Time" (Did I mention they are perfect dancing shoes?). I was struck with panic. What was I going to wear. I had nothing else. These were my only shoes. The only ones that I deserved.

So the sneakers came back out, as well as a pair of backup, one size too big bamboo plats, but it wasn't the same. The sneakers made me feel like an old lady who wore cruise wear, and the backup plats, when the soles got wet they were slippery, so I did a lot of impromptu "Just Practicing!" splits when I entered a room with hardwood floors.

Until I found these babies. Imitation wood (But FOAM!) inch and a half high sole. Pink, white, and fuschia print lining/base, with yellow and baby blue accents. Pink cord double straps, covered with plastic tubing. Platform thongs.

What more can you ASK FOR. Sure the straps ripped into the skin on my feet the first day I wore them, but I've toughened up. And they're oh-so-nice with everything I own. I paint my toenails for these shoes. I take care of my feet. And those babies love me back. Every damn day of the week.

And then some.

Lauren Modica

Looking Good At The Beach *New*

By Chris Rovny

AskMen.com

Flip-flops have been around forever but they have only recently been regarded as an element of style. All of the major designers have flip-flops as part of their summer collections and they come in all shapes, colors and materials.

The most popular ones are those with a single band going across the instep. Most major sports brands such as Nike, Reebok and Teva carry these basic models of footwear. The standard colors are red, blue and black when made of plastic or synthetic blends and all the regular colors associated with leather.

If you want something a little more risqué and with an extra element of uniqueness, opt for flip-flops with a split strap on the big toe or a wish bone shaped strapped separating the middle of the five toes.

Flip-flops come in all shapes and colors, so why buy the same ones as everybody else around? Instead, select a different shaped instep such as slightly angled cut in the front or a completely square sole.

The flip-flops will have a totally different ingredient to them but remain just as comfortable and practical. Another way to differentiate your sandals from the common ones is to go for a very flat sole or on the other extreme, a little more chunky sole. It's all a matter of having something different from the average Joe.

My advice for this season would be to pick simple and classy flip-flops. This means a simple design and no flashy colors. The "in" color for this season is red. Remember, however, to match the color of your sandals to that of your bathing suit.

Stick to unit-color flip-flops and preferably the type, which are more flattering and less chunky. Choose a plastic build because it is easy to wash and dries very fast compared to other materials. We all know that the less sand that sticks on our feet the better because it is probably the only annoying part of being at the beach.

A Love Affair With My Flip-Flops (by Fashion Diva)

In every store I look, whether online or at the mall, flip-flops seem to be calling out to me. Flip-flops have been around forever but they have only recently been regarded as an element of style. Flip-flops aren't just for the pool anymore. This summer (2002), they go from the beach to the office to the clubs. They were even spotted this spring with prom dresses. With all the styles out there, exposing your toes is a no-brainer.

All of the major designers have flip-flops as part of their summer collections and they come in all shapes, colors and materials. Browse through stores such as Old Navy, Payless ShoeSource and Target and you can check out flip-flops with beaded baubles and sequined flowerets as well as flip-flops in hues ranging from sedate black and metallic silver to citrus orange and cotton candy blue.

Why are flip-flops so popular? It's quite simple. It's a fun inexpensive way for all of us to update our summer look with truly comfy shoes. Prices range from as low as \$3.50 so whatever your budget, give your feet a treat! My fave pair? My Old Navy Classic Flip-Flops (only \$3.50!) and available in many bright colors to keep my feet happy! (Courtesy Cool Quiz I-- 07/23/02)

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Free your feet: Flip-flops are perfect for summer *New*

By Mary-Kathryn Craft
The Sun News

Posted on 07/07/2002

They come with sparkles, flowers and even orange beaded lobsters. You can get them at grocery stores, convenience marts and upscale boutiques.

Flip-flops - from simple rubber-soled thongs to suede platforms - are the hottest fashion for your feet this summer.

"They are the most comfortable," said Laura Allison, whose Surf City shops in Myrtle Square Mall and North Myrtle Beach sell a variety of name-branded flip-flops.

"Tennis shoes are horrible in the summer. With flip-flops, you can kick them off and go."

The flip-flop frenzy began during the last few years as a variety of styles and colors hit store shelves, and customers began craving comfort and ease, according to retail workers.

Beach-goers and surfers have long sported thong sandals, mainly for comfort and freedom, Allison said.

Many tourists strolling Myrtle Beach's Ocean Boulevard emit soft clicks and thuds as their flip-flops softly hit the backs of their heels. Diane Shockley, a vacationer from Atlanta, said she doesn't limit her flip-flop time to just the beach in the summer.

"They slip on, slip off and they are comfortable," she said, looking down at her cloth royal blue flip-flops with Hawaiian print.

Shockley's daughter Amanda, 13, said she has six pair, and matches them with different summer outfits. On this particular morning, she wore woven straw platform flip-flops with a thin leather baby blue thong the same color as her tank top.

Many people turn to flip-flops because they are affordable enough to buy several sets.

Basic rubber flip-flops at Old Navy are \$3.50 per pair. A straw and suede version is \$7.99. Target offers black, lavender or white sequined thongs for \$9.99 a pair.

Plus, they are everywhere.

Casual clothing stores such as The Gap and Old Navy feature flip-flops in bright or muted colors to match shirts, pants and bathing suits.

The Gap in Colonial Mall-Myrtle Beach has two displays of the popular shoe in the women's section and one in the men's.

The beaded variety are popular with customers, said manager Tara Stone.

The shop has sold so many flip-flops, "I felt like I've worked in a shoe store this year," she said.

The simple shoe, usually made of a sole and thong that goes between your first and second toe, has moved to upscale boutiques during its rise to footwear fame.

The Foxy Lady sells designer flip-flops that offer funky touches such as an orange beaded lobster dangling from a turquoise strap. The Beverly Feldman shoes go for \$110, said sales associate Sarah Weaver.

"A lot of people stray away from [flip-flops] because they feel like they don't offer enough support, but there are girls that will sacrifice anything for fashion," she said.

Many Foxy Lady customers usually pair their flip-flops with capri pants or matching shorts, Weaver said.

Cumi Ikeda, 19, who works at the Surf City in Myrtle Square Mall, said she wears Reefs because they offer more of a heel than other brands. But most people visit Surf City looking for Rainbow Sandals, a simple leather flip-flop that boasts comfort and durability. The shoes come with a lifetime guarantee, Ikeda said.

Allison said it's been hard for her store to keep up with the demand for Rainbow flip-flops this summer. Surf City has carried the shoes, which first appealed to surfers, for 25 years. Sales began picking up during the last five years when others learned about the shoe, Allison said.

"After last year, I thought everybody out there had a pair," she said. "But Father's Day and Mother's Day we sold out."

Eleven-year-old William Ford of Bristol, Tenn., prefers Adidas flip-flops because the brand is popular with his soccer team. The slide version, which consists of a wide strap of material across the top of the foot just below the toes, is popular among athletes. Adidas, Reebok, Nike and other athletic shoe manufacturers make slides.

William's friend Wilson Young, 9, who wore black Land's End slide flip-flops for a walk on the beach by Garden City Pier, said he likes the shoes for practical reasons.

"You don't have to tie them," he said.



Americans discover what already turned fever in 41 countries:

the Havaianas

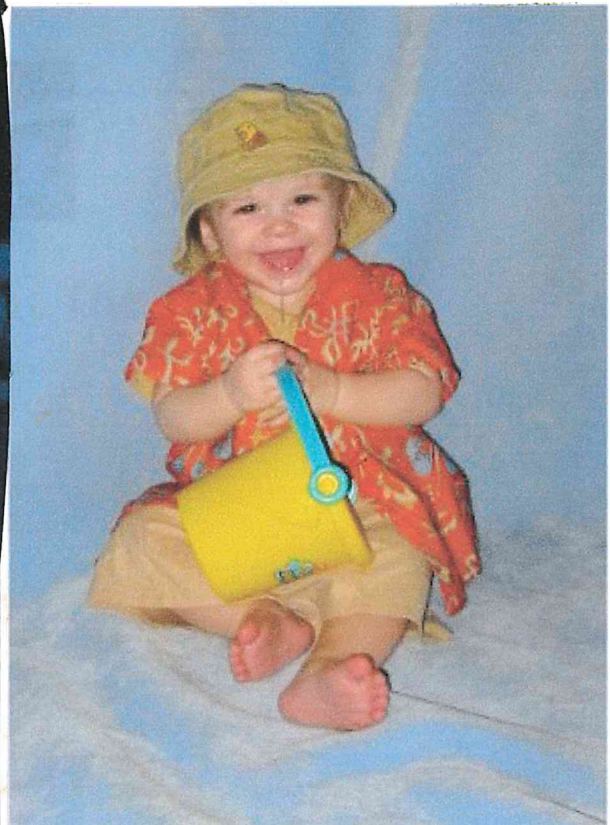
by Fabrícia Peixoto, Istoé Dinheiro

(translate from portugese by Google, corrected by Vincent)

Published on Aug. 21, 2002

A pair of rubber sandals is the new sensation in beaches of California. Magazines of fashion, as Elle and Cosmopolitan, do not tire to suggest the such "flip-flops" to its readers, in a true fever. What the Americans finish to discover the Brazilians they know has 40 years as Havaianas. The prominence most recent happened in the beginning of the month, when the slippers had arrived at the layer of the Wall street Journal, one of the most respected American periodicals. "Now a global mark of sandals exists: Havaianas ", it said Carlos Roza, general manager of exportations. In California, the Brazilian sandals had turned indispensable part in the wardrobe surfistas; in the French summer, it folloies young women in its colored dresses, while in the Ukraine cold, is used with stocking. Until the Stephanie princess, of Monaco, already it was photographed buying some pairs of the Brazilian sandal. Everything this consequence of a yaw in the sector of exportation of the Canvas shoes, manufacturer of the Hawaiian ones. Since 1998, the São Paulo company left of side a passive position to run behind international partners, gifts in 41 countries. Since then sells in the exterior had tripled, arriving the 5 million pairs in the last year. "Before in them we contented with some few customers who came in looking them. This moved ", says Carlos Roza, general manager of exportation of Havaianas.

In contrast of that Brazil occurred in, where the Havaianas ones had passed of a product of classrooms D and and for the glory of passarelas, in the external market they already appear as article of luxury. In the Europe, they arrive to cost US\$ 20 the pair. Deducting taxes and it has freighted, still thus the price is very above of US\$ 3 that the slippers cost, in average, in Brazil. "They need to cost expensive, senão the consumers of the Galeries Lafayette, in France, do not buy", say Roza. But the staff of the Canvas shoes does not make no question of being elitist. What they want are, in brief, to expand sells for other points, as supermarkets and store of convenience. For this, it is necessary to gain popularity still more. Beyond the investments in advertising (always divided with the local deliverers), the sandals had gained a good international prominence with the gratuitous propaganda made by top models Gisele Bündchen and Naomi Campbell, that already had said fans of the Havaianas. The company has if also strengthenn to conquer the men. This week, the estréia mark as sponsor of one of the stages of the national championship of surf of the United States. The idea is to make the fashion to catch, as in Brazil. In the passed year, 120 million pairs had been sold. "Practically each Brazilian has its", says Roza.





Gal Pal Hal--This woman pictured here is actress **Gwyneth Paltrow**, who starred in the 2001 movie, "**Shallow Hal**." Gwyneth is photographed here in a **blue-and-red** sleeveless (and strapless) tube top, with **navy** shorts, and black flip-flops!

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<u>Brazil's newest hot export</u>	The Philippine STAR	Nov. 2003
<u>Footware Phenomenon</u>	Univertydaily.net	Nov. 2003
<u>Firm foothold</u>	News-Press.com	Oct. 2003
<u>Berkeley students have style</u>	UCBerkeley News	Sept. 2003
<u>Give your feet a break</u>	Florida flambeau	Sept. 2003
<u>Fabulous flip-flops</u>	Los Angeles Times	Sept. 2003
<u>Flip-flop fashion goes year-round</u>	Portland Press Herald	Sept. 2003
<u>Flip-flops are top</u>	The Anniston Star	Aug. 2003
<u>Flip-flop day gives summer the boot</u>	Denver Post	Aug. 2003
<u>Flip-flops create school fashion flap</u>	Pensacola News	Aug. 2003
<u>America Becoming A Flip-Flop Nation</u>	The Morning News	Aug. 2003
<u>Sole Searching: The history of flip-flops</u>	Sun Sentinel	July 2003
<u>Why everyone's flipping for flip-flops</u>	The Gazette Net	July 2003
<u>Flip-flopping Head Over Heels</u>	On The Wall	July 2003

<u>Hot to trot</u>	Odessa American Online	July 2003
<u>Flip-Flops---For The Office Or The Beach?</u>	Active Pro	July 2003
<u>Flip-flops have many devoted fans</u>	St Louis Today	July 2003
<u>Flip-flops make fashionable impression</u>	Los Angeles Times	July 2003
<u>THINK SIMPLE FOR SUMMER STYLE</u>	Long Island Press	July 2003
<u>Grab those flip-flops: Surf's up in fashion world</u>	Rocky Mountains News	July 2003
<u>Flip-flops gaining office popularity</u>	Reuter	July 2003
<u>Flip-Flop Fly</u>	Latintrade.com	July 2003
<u>Summer's time to flip over flops</u>	Athens Banner-Herald	July 2003
<u>Falling for flip-flops</u>	ARIZONA DAILY STAR	June 2003
<u>Footloose: Flip-flops, open-toe sandals summer shoe-ins</u>	Knight Ridder Newspapers	June 2003
<u>FLIP-FLOPS FEVER</u>	Buffalo News	June 2003
<u>A triumph of engineering - flip-flops with heels</u>	Telegraph.co.uk	May 2003
<u>Flip-flop summer</u>	Spotlight Online	May 2003
<u>A Fashion Flip(Flop)</u>	Albuquerque Journal	May 2003
<u>The Catfight Over ... Flip-Flops</u>	New York Observer	May 2003

<u>Thongs step up</u>	Tucson Citizen	May 2003
<u>Flip-flops: A love story</u>	The Dallas Morning News	May 2003
<u>Free at last! Flip-flops and other strappy sandals are a shoe-in for summer</u>	Knight Ridder Newspapers	May 2003
<u>Flippity, floppity footwear</u>	The Augustana Mirror	April 2003
<u>What's in style this season: 'As much skin as you can show'</u>	Indiana Statesman	April 2003
<u>Sandal From Brazil Is New Fashion Flavor</u>	The New York Times	March 2003 <i>New</i>
<u>Winter's foot fad: Flip-flops</u>	Fredericksburg.com	March 2003
<u>Havaianas, the dental wire of the feet or: the slipper of the Brazilians</u>	Caiman.de	February 2003
<u>Fashion flips over the thong</u>	<i>Smh.com.australia</i>	January 2003
<u>Go Fashionably in Flip-Flops</u>	Thirddage Daily News	January 2003

International Press Review 2004

<u>The Beach Look for School</u>	The New York Times	Apr. 2004
<u>Flip-Flops, Sandals keep getting better, more popular</u>	Newsleader.com	Apr. 2004
<u>Slipping into flip-flops</u>	The Miami Herald	March 2004
<u>A total flop</u>	The Boston Phoenix	March 2004
<u>Flops to flip for</u>	The Arizona Republic	March 2004

Go Fashionably in Flip-Flops

Thirddage Daily News

Flip-flop fever is here. The humble, rubber-soled footwear you took for granted as you flopped around the beach in years gone by has stepped into the limelight of fashion in 1999 -- albeit with a few changes, says London fashion expert Lucie Dobbs.

The brightly colored flip-flops so favored by vacationers have become "a sophisticated, fashion-conscious accessory," says Dobbs. Except now the footwear is adorned with diamante, crochet, beads, sequins and even feathers -- fit for wearing just about anywhere but the beach.

Dodds says today's flip-flops include heavier, sporty-types such as surfing-style thongs elevated on a small rubber platform with Velcro fastenings and liberally emblazoned with designer labels. These summer shoes "also look great with casual, wide-leg cotton trousers and Cher-style distressed denim jeans."

"Because your flip-flops will be attracting plenty of attention," she says, and warning "make sure your feet are exfoliated and moisturized. Toenails should be kept short and neatly filed, and a shimmer of metallic or pale pastel nail varnish will complete a clean, modern look."



Marvelous Marina--

In historic **Russia**, a country known for politics, and where the 1980 Olympics were held (without the **USA** athletes), this is **Marina**, who in this photo here is a teacher at work in **orange** sweater, a black skirt with white stenciled squares, and also bare feet!

Marina had to take off her shoes, and her stockings, just to go barefooted!

(Photo taken in 2000--est.)

Fashion flips over the thong

Smh.com.australia, January 14 2003

The humble footwear sported with pride by ockers everywhere now has the fashion word at its feet. Rich Watkins reports.

Kevin burped and then scowled. "What do you mean why did I fix 'em?" he said. "They were bloody broken, that's why." On his feet was a pair of thongs that he had bought in the '70s; a piece of chicken wire dangled from the end of his right foot, the result of a loving repair job.

The thongs were paper-thin and Kev's toes indelibly imprinted into the rubber, like the hoofprints of Hollywood stars. As he stomped off in disgust, the sound of thongs slapping applause on the pavement, it was evident that flip-flops suited Kev like tomato sauce suits meat pies. Only the cold-hearted would have pointed him towards a new pair from Kmart (cheap) or Armani (not so cheap).

Has the thong been transformed from ocker icon into a women's fashion accessory? Lindie Ward, curator of the Powerhouse Museum's 1997 exhibition *Stepping Out: Three Centuries of Shoes*, thinks so. "The thong now walks down the streets of New York," she says. "It has never been as ornate as it is today. Every 20 or 30 years fashions return, and that's what has happened with it.

"The thong has been around the world. We don't know where it originated but we do know that the Egyptians were wearing a kind of thong in 3000 BC and the Japanese have been wearing them forever."

Ward sorts through a folder devoted to the life and times of the ubiquitous footwear. It contains images of Africans wearing animal-skin thongs and Indians in ivory flip-flops. The thong has certainly trodden a well-travelled path through countless societies. But only in Australia has it been elevated to icon status: on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, for instance, Thong Motors has been a local joke for decades.

Pausing to point at a picture of a bloke in a suit and what are unmistakably thongs, Ward explains that the modern, rubber sole thong was developed in the late '50s and early '60s.

"But it's not certain whether it was in New Zealand or Australia," she says. "Both countries claim to have invented it."

She believes a strong case exists that today's thong first appeared on the other side of the Tasman Sea: "All the evidence points towards New Zealand, where Maurice Yock invented the jandal in 1957. There isn't any evidence of Australians producing anything thong-like before Dunlop in the '60s."

Whatever its origins, the thong's value as an Australian icon remains undiminished. And at the moment, it is also enjoying a fashion rebirth.

Meg Rottman, spokeswoman for the World Shoe Association, the massive footwear trade show held twice a year in the US, believes that the thong's popularity among women reflects shifting fashion trends: "The flip-flop, and its many variations, is here to stay.

"As fashion is tending towards the casual, footwear follows suit. As a result, people are looking to the ultra-casual flip-flop for day, beach and active wear. As the workplace becomes casual, leisure wear has become even more casual."

Emma Rouse, 21, a part-time Glebe model, bought her first pair of thongs last summer and is now addicted. "I've got six pairs," she says. "But the only people you used to see wearing them were disgusting old men with beer guts in blue singlets and stubbies shorts."

So thongs are chic, but Ward says that the ocker variety will never disappear: "The Aussie bloke will always love his thong. It's

very Australian." She pulls a photograph from her folder of a pair of tattered red thongs. "The bloke who owned this pair wore them all round the world," she says.

"It took a lot of convincing to get him to donate them to the Powerhouse. If you look at the strapping, you can see where he has mended it with wire."

It looks as if Kevin might have quite a few sole mates ...



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Havaianas, the dental wire of the feet or: the slipper of the Brazilians

By Thomas Milz, Caiman.de

(translated from portugese)

Posted on Feb. 2003

They are a myth, a cult, bacanas and one of the few weapons in the combat to the stinking feet, caused for the tropical climate in set with the closed shoes. And they are palco for one of the parts eróticas of the human body: the feet!

Havaianas they mean...

Freedom (the freedom of the pressure and the discomfort of the closed shoes. Freedom to even breathe deeply, with the feet),

Flexibility (of being able to take bath without having that to pull off one's shoes),

Status (therefore you nor need to pave luxury shoe),

I begin Economic (with the minimum "input" of rubber if obtains the maximum comfort),

Exhibitionism (to show to the foot sexy)

I remember, still, of one said of a Brazilian, whose name I do not remember more: "Happiness is a stonewashed blue pants and a good pair of Havaianas."

Thinking well, a rubber piece, oval and plain, rounded off is alone in the two tips, with a wider side of the one than the other. E, more or less for there, has holes, where the straps are anchored, of format V, for where if it threads the foot. That elegant strap combines with tanga or the dental wire in top. Of the infantile size of 23/24, until giants 45/46, they represent **the "simpler reply to the necessity to protect the feet"**.

Havaianas they are the plates of the life, with them if surfa without commitment for daily, the separate one only for half second of the nudez. While most conventional, the carriers of shoes, delay an eternity to take off shoe and stocking, the ' havaianista ' simply goes down of the plate.

Despite this, the choice of the type of Havaianas says very on the character of the carrier. Who has the courage to dress the models wild of the type "Bamboo", that it is presented in blue-nautical, carmim, straw and green-military man? E will be that everybody finds me one hippie of beach, because only walks of "Surf", type that if finds in aubergin, black color and blue-oil?

But the true fans swear that a classic only exists, **the "Havaianas Traditional one"**, of a color alone, either this blue one, turn yellow, black person, rose, green or chocolate, model offered in many esquinas of the littoral cities of Brazil.

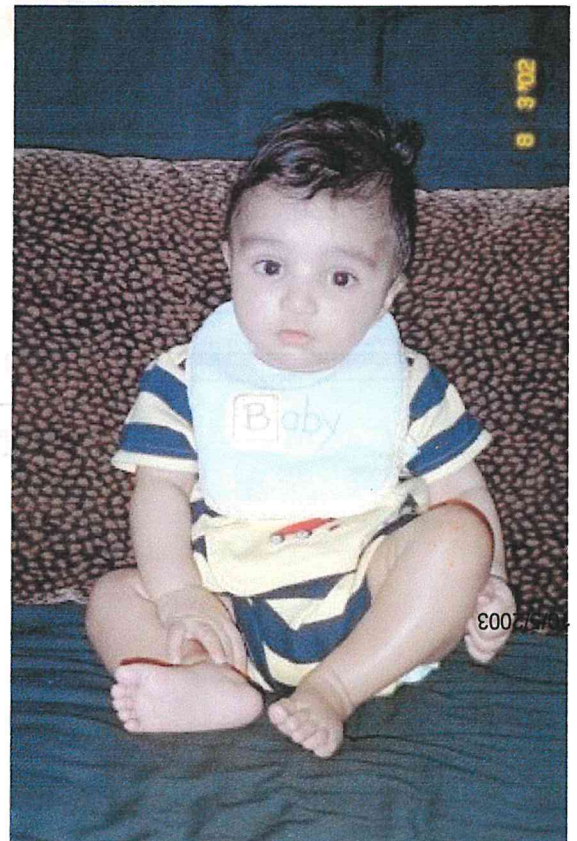
Hardly one another shoe with so fanatic fans as of the Havaianas ones can be found. But this if must to the fact of that the Havaianas one shows to the pretty foot of the people, underlining the beauties and, thus, attracting the fetichistas. Logical that a site of fans if calls "Fetiche". Here histories meet most absurd on meeting well special with the slippers and its carriers, in the majority of the feminine sex. It has the estória of a youngster, crazy gotten passionate for the feet sexy of three colleagues of the capoeira course. When stealing the Havaianas ones of them, it is apanhado by the girls and faces the militant force of the Havaianas ones in its nádegas - what he brings it, beyond pains, some eróticos feelings.

Without speaking of other history on the gotten passionate coitado one that, desesperadamente, starts to chew the Havaianas ones of it, until the young woman, suddenly, sees it and they fall in a loving case.

But far of such adventures they are people as I, accustomed to walk of closed shoe and heavy for the mud of the cold and rainy weather of the Europe. When these people arrive in a tropical beach, adore to walk bare-footed. As I felt the lack of a good pair of Havaianas has some time behind, walking bare-footed in a beach. The sand dispatches by post in live coals for the burning hot sun of the noon and, in the way for the car, the tarred parking burnt the palm of my feet, while the sun fortissimo fried the remaining portion of my body.

Who grows with Havaianas, never will lose this bacana skill and has led to balance in the wave, to make waist game. I, personally, prefer the slippers more conservatives and squares of the Raider mark, therefore never I obtained to walk in a good one with the Havaianas ones. They twist themselves under of my feet, escape in such way that, when going up or going down stairs, I have that to extend my fingers against soles, not to fall. E the Brazilians look at for me, unbelievers - this foreigner nor obtains to walk of slipper!

"Havaianas, the only ones that they do not deform, do not have smell and they do not free the straps." (official Propaganda)



Winter's foot fad: Flip-flops

By DEVIN WAIS

Fredericksburg.com

Date published: 3/3/2003

It's the middle of February.

The temperature is in the high 40s, low 50s.

Mary Washington College sophomore Lydia Frost gets out of bed and prepares for class.

She throws on jeans, a sweatshirt, and a pair of flip-flops.

Flip-flops?

"I'm too lazy to put on socks and shoes," said Frost.

The 'cool' thing to do

For the past few winters, flip-flops and sandals have appeared on the feet of students at college campuses and high schools across the nation. Regardless of the freezing temperatures and snowy weather, many students prefer open-toed shoes to enclosed, warm boots or sneakers.

"I'm very stubborn. I don't believe winter will get the best of me," said Mary Washington College sophomore Kristin Machado. "My flip-flops are like a second skin to me. And I think they look better with sweaters."

According to a December 2000 article in The Washington Post, the trend began when England's trendsetter, Prince William, was photographed by the paparazzi wearing flip-flops on a chilly day.

"It's more of a fashion statement," said MWC junior Anne Beverly. "I just like the 'cool yet casual' look that sandals provide. It's like I'm above even the cold."

It's easy for young people to keep their feet in fashion, even while in flip-flops during the winter, when popular stores such as Old Navy and Target start selling open-toed shoes in January.

But other young people disregard the idea that wearing flip-flops and sandals year-round is simply a fashion trend.

"I've been doing this since eighth grade," said Machado. "It's not a conscious thing. I just don't like clunky shoes."

The simplicity of flip-flops appeals to many college students--instead of having to take the time to put on socks and shoes in the morning, some find it much easier to just slide on a pair of sandals and head out the door.

"I mainly do it for comfort and convenience," said MWC senior Marit Davies. "Sandals are so easy to slip on in the

morning. Also, I hardly ever have clean socks, so sandals are a big help in that area."

The snowball effect

Not only are college students braving the cold with bare toes, but the trend has made its way into high schools as well.

James Andrews, an English teacher at Stafford High School, has noticed the emergence of open-toed shoes during the winter months in his classroom. However, he does not feel it presents too much of a problem, despite the weather.

"Open-toed shoes in the winter aren't much different than in the summer, as people usually go inside, anyway," Andrews said. "They might get chilly tootsies between the car and the school, but that wouldn't hurt much, if any."

James Monroe senior Andrew David said that the comfort level outweighs the cold.

"I wear Birkenstocks year-round, with socks in the winter," David said. "I like my feet to be free and comfortable."

Julie Kelsey, a science teacher at Stafford High, said the decision was up to the students.

"It's their choice. I wouldn't do it, but that's them," Kelsey said.

Ashley Hughes, a junior at Massaponax High School, says she wears flip-flops in the winter, but only if it's above freezing outside.

"If you're inside, it's fine," she said. "But to go play out in the snow, you're crazy."

Andrews points out that people have done far crazier things for the sake of fashion.

"Girls who want to be stylish certainly aren't bothered too much by a little cold, when [you take] one look at what people are willing to do in other areas to make themselves 'beautiful,'" said Andrews. "Beautiful toes can be shown at all times."

Some parents may not agree.

"My parents say, 'You can get into U.Va. early-decision, but yet you go out in the winter in sandals,'" David said.

Baby, it's cold outside

Some believe there are a few people who might wear sandals year-round for medical reasons, instead of just style and comfort.

"I think that some people wear flip-flops year-round because their feet get really hot otherwise," said Beverly. "It might be a biological thing."

But according to Brian Doyle, clinical professor of psychiatry and family medicine at Georgetown Medical School, there is no scientific reason for teenagers and young adults to not want to wear sweaters, scarves and winter shoes during the colder months.

Teenagers "may be a little warmer than the rest of us because those little engines are revved up, and it's a very

vital, active time of life," Doyle said. "But it's not that. It's just cool to wear sandals in the winter, and besides which, it drives your parents and teachers crazy."

Machado says her parents have never said anything to her about her winter flip-flop-wearing habit.

"My mother has never commented on it," she said. "My stepfather wears them year-round, but he's from Hawaii, so that may have something to do with it."

Regardless of whether or not parents approve, there is always the threat of frostbite, which can be a result of inadequate clothing protection during low temperatures.

"In my nonprofessional medical opinion, I don't think there is any major health threat by wearing flip-flops in the winter, except cold feet, maybe frostbite," said MWC pre-med senior Erica Davis.

Wearing flip-flops during the winter months, obviously, can increase the risk of frostbite in feet and toes.

Even so, the threat of permanent damage caused by frostbite doesn't deter some people.

"I like my feet to be free," said Davies. "Shoes are overrated."

Getting the cold shoulder

While the trend seems to grow with every winter, there are still some people who think the idea of wearing open-toed shoes in cold weather isn't as cool as others would like to believe.

"I wear dock shoes a good portion of the year so I don't know if I can really talk," said MWC senior Eric Frere. "But I think flip-flops all year are ridiculous."

Davis agreed with him, citing the fashion aspect of flip-flops.

"I personally don't care for flip-flops in the winter," said Davis. "They're definitely a summer shoe. They scream beach, not snow."

Some believe they would be more concerned with the effect of cold weather on their feet.

"I think people who wear flip-flops year-round are very brave," said MWC junior Summer Edell. "I couldn't handle the cold."

Among others, there is a fierce anti-winter flip-flop sentiment.

"It looks stupid and their feet are cold," said MWC junior Ted Lewis. "They make shoes for a reason."

Some feel those who wear flip-flops throughout the year are not only lazy, but delusional as well.

"People who wear flip-flops year-round are living in a fantasy world," said 2002 MWC graduate Sean Doss. "Not only are they acting like it's 80 degrees all the time, they're lazy because they don't have any laces to tie up."

Augusta Hill, a sophomore at Massaponax High School, also pointed out the cold-toe aspect.

"I think it's retarded," said Hill. "I can see them wearing them spring through maybe fall, but once winter rolls around, buy some real shoes."

In spite of professional and peer opinions, it seems toes in the cold are here to stay.

"I've been called a hippie on several occasions because I wear sandals in the winter," said Davies. "It really doesn't bother me. Hippies are all about love, peace, and happiness. What more can you ask for in life, anyway?"



Sarah Kuttner from "Viva Interaktiv." Episode 10.07.2003 1/55

Shifter for the HITW

What's in style this season: 'As much skin as you can show'

By Shannon Douglas
Indiana Statesman

April 02, 2003

Spring has finally sprung and it's time to put away those heavy coats and sweaters and bring out your new wardrobe filled with hot, new spring fashions. This year, the students of ISU have declared that skin is in.

Lauren "Pez" Pestikas, junior journalism major, said "as much skin as you can show" is what's in style this season.

Flip-flops and sandals are the most popular amongst the students for this year's spring fashion. Right when warm weather sprouts, people get rid of their boots and put on their sandals as often as possible.

Sporting her chunky flip-flops and enjoying the nice weather Tuesday was Kassidy Hiatt, sophomore marketing major. She said flip-flops were definitely in style, and she also said she liked capris, jean skirts and little T-shirts.

And not just girls like flip-flops: they're in style for the guys as well. Eric Balka, sophomore open preference, said, "Flip-flops are in for guys this year."



Flippity, floppity footwear: fashionable yet functional

By Leah Simmons

The Augustana Mirror, 26 April 2003

There are many great inventions that have redefined the way humans function in this brave new world, but truly no invention is more prized or loved by the masses than the flip-flop. For those who deny this fundamental reality, I offer this, my proclamation for flip-flop wonder and how it triumphs over the vile and loathsome sandal.

For instance, flip-flops are cheap. Sure, you get what you pay for, but they serve their purpose in due time. Since flip-flops inexpensively cover your feet, you can easily buy about 20 pairs for the price of one - "that's right, one" - one pair of sandals. And what are you really paying for when you get a pair of sandals? One could possibly argue quality, but what kind of quality can you only wear one summer?

I've had to buy dozens of pairs of new sandals to try to cover my feet; it seems that since middle school my feet triple in size every summer. Indeed, though you may outgrow your flip-flops, it doesn't matter because they usually will only last one summer if you're lucky, and since they're so cheap, it's no problem to replace them.

Another argument for the flip-flop's superiority is its material. Plastic: recyclable and animal friendly. For those out there who don't agree with wearing leather, truly the flip flop is the ideal shoe for you. Made from state-of-the-art plastic foam and straps, your flip-flops hurt few, if any animals. Also, since the whole shoe is recyclable, it can be made into the shoes of the future. Let's see a pair of sandals do that!

Besides, being made of plastic, the flip-flop is ideal for aquatic endeavors be it the beach or an Augie shower stall: lightweight, waterproof and floatable! Last time I saw a pair of sandals in water, they were rapidly sinking to the bottom of a lake.

A remark that often plagues the flip-flop is that it is tacky, unfashionable and inappropriate for everyday wear. Well, you loving sandal-freaks, when was the last time you walked through aisles of Kmart? The flip-flop has been reborn in a variety of funky and even classy styles from Hawaiian flowers at Kmart to sexy pin-ups at Abercrombie and Fitch. Because of the exciting variety, flip-flops can go anywhere from the beach to church, something that is a little difficult for sandals, which lack variety outside "brown" or "brownish tan."

My final argument for my flop-flippity friend is that unlike a pair of Doc Martins or Columbias, flip-flops transcend all boundaries of class. Everyone is equal when he or she flip-flops down the hall or into the Commons. In a way, flip-flops are the great equalizer, placing the "my-other-shoes-are-plated-in-gold" student on the same level playing field as the "I-get-to-wear-sandwich-bags-when-it-rains" student. In the end, a human (used in the general sense of all men and women, of course) is only as humble as the shoes on his feet, and who could be humbler in a pair of trusty flip-flops?

So you see, flip-flops truly are God's greatest gift to man. Why, nothing can stop you in a pair of flip-flops, not even the creepy stuff growing in the showers! I suppose the real root of my love for flip-flops is my hatred for sandals. Granted, you may see me in sandals once in a blue moon, but only because they were a gift that I felt obligated to wear them - a mistake that would leave me with blisters the size of marbles.

Even though my flip-flops are old (had them since the day I moved in!), I would never trade them for a pair of smelly sandals.

Despite what my dear, yet horribly misguided, friend Eric says, I shall never go back to those lame excuses for shoes. In my humble opinion, flip-flops truly make life worth living.

Free at last! Flip-flops and other strappy sandals are a shoe-in for summer

Alyson Ward
Knight Ridder Newspapers
May. 10, 2003 12:00 AM

We've always been tempted to go barefoot in the summer. Lucky for us, that can almost be arranged this year.

Fashion has finally freed the foot. Toes no longer languish in leather. Heels can breathe the open air, unhindered. Flip-flops and slides, sandals and mules rule the day - for women and men - and it looks as if they're here to stay. Yes, the flip-flop, once relegated to the beach bag and the back yard, has turned out to be more than a one-summer fashion fling. Flip-flops have hung around so many years, they've become their own category of warm-weather shoes - as respectable as mules and as common as loafers.

How did this happen? How did the delicate, insubstantial flip-flop manage to single-handedly stop the revolving door of fashion?

Practicality. And comfort.

The barely there shoe just makes sense, says Liz Epstein, co-owner of flipfloptrunkshow.com, an Internet-based "flip-flop boutique."

"In the summer, you want the least on you that you can have," she says.

Besides, flip-flops have evolved in the past few years - they're no longer so cheap and disposable. In fact, they've even gone high-fashion, Epstein notes: Manolo Blahnik, Jimmy Choo and Helmut Lang now design flip-flops.

"I sell some really dressy flip-flops," Epstein says - including many to brides and bridesmaids who plan to wear them during the wedding, not just afterward.



Sandal From Brazil Is New Fashion Flavor

By TONY SMITH

The New York Times - 30/03/2003

SÃO PAULO, Brazil — Those nominees piqued at having to walk away from Sunday's Oscar ceremony without a statue can seek comfort in a curious consolation prize — a pair of rubber sandals. In their native Brazil, 120 million pairs of these sandals are sold each year, at a less-than-princely \$3 each.

That might sound downright unglamorous for Hollywood, but the Havaianas flip-flops, an everyman's classic here since 1962, are now fashion's flavor of the month in the United States, finding takers in high-end stores for prices as high as \$160 for a customized, jewel-encrusted pair.

So far, distribution is being restricted to up-market chains like Marshall Field's and Nordstrom, and more prestigious surf stores on the West Coast.

In New York, Saks Fifth Avenue recently put the sandals in three of its windows and now wants a special, customized Havaianas line, the Brazilian manufacturers say.

"We're determined to position our brand well in the United States, not just win market share through cheap pricing," said Angela Hirato, export director at São Paulo Alpargatas, which makes the colorful thong that started out as a surf sandal but is now worn by Brazilians of all walks of life, from the country's president to domestic help.

"In Brazil, we sell in supermarkets, but abroad our main aim is to implant the brand at the top of the pyramid," Ms. Hirato said. "If you go in at the bottom end, you just become another commodity."

For years, Brazil mainly exported commodities like coffee and sugar, making the country's national accounts particularly susceptible to volatility in global markets.

Now the government is promoting efforts to sell more manufactured, value-added products abroad, aiming to turn a chronic current account deficit into a surplus and so reduce dependence on foreign capital.

So far, for Alpargatas at least, that strategy appears to be working.

Two years ago, the company, owned by the construction giant Camargo Corrêa, exported 1.5 percent of its production. Today, that share has risen to 5 percent, and next year's goal is 15 percent. Profits rose to \$14 million last year, 46 percent higher than \$9.5 million in 2001.

Since introducing Havaianas on the West Coast just six months ago, one importer, David Sengstaken, has sold 100,000 pairs and calmly predicts a potential United States market of "millions, or even millions and millions."

If growth rates in other markets are anything to go by, Mr. Sengstaken could be right. In 1999, Alpargatas introduced Havaianas in surf-crazy Australia and sold 1,000 pairs. Last year, sales there topped 350,000 pairs, and this year's projection is for 500,000.

In the United States, regular Havaianas retail around \$10, while sandals decorated by local designers fetch anywhere from \$80 to \$160 in Beverly Hills.

"The secret of Havaianas is that they have become a style icon, a classic," said Paulo Macedo, fashion editor at Vogue's Portuguese edition, who was in São Paulo recently for a fashion shoot.

Asked to explain why the rubber thongs are all over style magazines like Vogue, Cosmopolitan, Elle and Wallpaper, and were

recently used by the designer Jean-Paul Gaultier on Paris catwalks, Mr. Macedo said, "They're cheap, they're comfortable, they're the originals, but with a couple of Swarovski crystals sewn onto them, they are simply fantastic."

That transformation from Brazilian footwear staple to a symbol of international Bohemian chic — Ms. Hirato says stars like Julia Roberts, Nicole Kidman, Sandra Bullock and Sting wear Havaianas — is the thrust behind Alpargatas's marketing strategy for the United States.

Mr. Sengstaken's wife and partner, Kerri, presented A-list guests at the recent Grammy party with Havaianas and then got the special, bejeweled models into gift baskets presented to Oscar runners-up by the fashion industry the day after the ceremony.

"We have mostly built the brand through P.R. and have established a cult following," she said. "We have had to do it that way. We can't afford \$100,000-a-page ads in In Style."

But some analysts say that is Alpargatas's Achilles' heel. As a small company, it cannot afford the huge advertising budgets needed to promote products in the United States.

"Alpargatas's gross margins are not too different from, say, Nike's," said Daniel Pasquali, a consumer goods analyst at Fator Doria Atherino, a São Paulo brokerage firm. "But without scale, a lot of profit is eaten away by costs such as advertising."

"If that's true for them in Brazil, imagine having to promote the product in the United States," he said.

Still, Alpargatas plans to tap this high-volume market.

Ms. Hirato's export team is preparing a second, cheaper brand for lower-end United States retail outlets. Carrying a tropical name like Samba or Aloha, the new brand should retail below \$7 and will be available in three or four colors, she said. "If we want to sell millions to Wal-Mart right now, we're dead," she said. "But later, with a second, cheaper range, why not?"



Flip-flops: A love story

By JACKIE BOLIN / The Dallas Morning News

Published : May 8th, 2003

A few weeks ago, a friend phoned in need of a favor. "When you get a chance – and I completely understand if you're too busy," she started, "but, when you have some free time, I want you to do something for me." 'Spit it out,' I thought, awaiting her request. "Well, when you get some time, I was wondering if you'd ..." "Yes?" "Go shoe shopping with me." Huh? "I just can't find any shoes," she whined. "I need some comfortable, cute summer shoes to wear to work every day, and I can't find any anywhere."

My shopping-challenged friend didn't realize she was asking the wrong person.

While I love to shop and I'm a sucker for a pretty shoe, I consider myself more a collector. My pricey heels lie nestled in boxes, in delicate drawstring pouches, reserved for special use or the occasional impromptu exhibition where I systematically pull out each pair, explaining where and how they were acquired and proving I *do* have other shoes – besides flip-flops.

It's a Dallas thing. It's a Texas thing. And slowly but surely, it's becoming a fashion thing. Flip-flops are low-maintenance. They're comfortable, and they allow your feet to breathe. They're unassuming but can also make big statements such as, "I'm so cool I don't even care about what's on my feet," or "Comfort is my main priority."

Unglamorous, you say? Just look at the feet of Jennifer Aniston. Or Britney Spears. Or Kate Hudson.

And if flip-flops didn't exist? "I'd go crazy," says Jennie Germany, a Highland Park High School senior, "I buy at least 10 pairs a year. Why? Because they're comfortable and easy, and you can just kick them on and off."

When a Neiman Marcus top executive and company fashion plate showed up to a gala last year in YSL and rubber flip-flops (this is a man, mind you), many saw a Sharon Stone-inspired fashion statement. I saw a new friend. It was the middle of winter in Dallas, and that particular night was exceptionally chilly. My kind of guy.

"Flip-flops are just good," says Kelly Morrison, owner of Off the Shoulder boutique in Knox Park Village. "As long as they're cute, you can wear them with anything and still be dressy." Thong-style flip-flops are virtually the only shoes at her store in Dallas. "They sell like crazy," she says.

"It's a chic statement," says Connie Sigel, owner of Elements at Lovers Lane and the Dallas North Tollway. "It used to be that flip-flops were just for women to wear after they got a pedicure. Now it's a real fashion statement." And where they once were considered mostly for the young, Ms. Sigel says, "Everybody feels comfortable in them now."

"You can go anywhere from a \$1.99 pair at Eckerd's to the \$140 Karl Lagerfeld version at Chanel." But Ms. Sigel did draw the flip-flop line when employees encouraged her to stock Lady Lanells, the \$150 Swarovski crystal-embellished rubber thongs worn by Sarah Jessica Parker. "I'd rather eat caviar," she says.

In the end, I politely explained to my friend why, unless she was willing to surrender to flip-flops, I couldn't help her.

"That's what everyone says," she sighed.

Thongs step up

Tucsonans put their best feet forward in thongs

By LORRIE COHEN/Tucson Citizen

May 9, 2003

People everywhere are flip-flopping over thongs.

Be the footwear rubber or leather, what used to be for the beach or casual wear is now showing up at offices, formals and even weddings. Thongs come in every color with everything attached from bows and beads to sequins and glitter.

"They are all over the place," said Kevin Jones, museum curator at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising, based in Los Angeles. "I've seen them worn with slinky evening dresses with a slit all the way up on the thigh, no stockings ... just a jeweled thong. It's so all over the place that I'm not even noticing it. It's so prevalent out here all year around."

Here, it's the same.

Just ask Caitlin Madea, a 24-year-old teacher out for an iced drink at Starbucks in Park Place. She was wearing glittery purple 2-inch-high flip-flops with a nice pair of slacks.

"When I get married, I'm wearing flip-flops," said Madea, who has about 30 pairs. "My mother thinks it looks ridiculous."

Madea happened to be wearing Rocketdogs, a popular brand that runs about \$30 to \$60. Most department stores carry many different styles of thongs and flip-flops ranging in price from \$30 on up, including Steve Madden and Guess brands.

While people interchange the words "thongs" and "flip-flops," there is a difference, said Ellen Goldstein, chairwoman of the accessories department at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

A thong has a leather sole and material that goes between your big and first toes.

A flip-flop is usually made of rubber or plastic. It doesn't have to go between your toes but usually does.

"Sandal" is the umbrella term for flip-flops and thongs. Other names these sandals are known as are Zoris or Go Aheads, but those are brand names. As far as heels go, most are flat, but some have heels as high as 4 inches. What makes these types of sandals more popular than ever is that lower-end prices are showing up in department store accessory departments - and in price-conscious stores such as Wal-Mart, Mervyn's and Target. "Last year we had a few styles, and now this year, because of the demand, about 15 to 20," said Cathy Molina, sales associate in shoes at Target, 6500 E. Tanque Verde Road. "Everyone wants them. I've been told to overstock them on the shelves because they are flying out of the store."

Cost for these fashion sandals? Under \$20.

"I like them. They are comfortable and nice-looking," said Matinda Lohr, a 40-year-old schoolteacher trying on a \$16 pair with blue sequins at Target. "I'd wear these to work."

Most workplaces don't see a problem with it. At the city of Tucson, for example, they are worn daily.

"I see casual shoes like that all the time here. We are a casual community," said Jay Gonzales, city spokesman.

"I'm actually sitting here at the IT (information technology) office and looking at a big photo of the entire IT staff, and there are a couple with a nicer outfit and a pair of thongs, and that's OK."

It's not OK only if safety is a factor, he added.

OK, what about thong etiquette? Now that cheaper fashion thongs are everywhere, what are the do's and don'ts? That answer depends on whom you ask.

But experts agree on this: If your toes are not perfectly manicured, forget about thongs!

"No hangnails, no scruff. I don't care if they are polished or buffed, just have them presentable," Goldstein said.

Jones added, "I know they are comfortable and easy to kick off and on, and you can get a full tan, but please, unless you have a great pedicure, forget it. We don't want to see your feet."

And, he said, most are for the under-45 crowd - no bunions, either.

Goldstein said there are other places thongs and flip-flops should not be worn.

"I know they are fun and comfortable, but if you want to dress the role for success, a thong is not the type of shoe to wear," Goldstein said. "It's not the appropriate attire for a business suit if you're going to an interview or a gallery opening or a wedding. And if you're going to a restaurant for dinner, no one wants to smell your feet." She said the best way to know whether thongs are appropriate is: "If you have to think whether they are appropriate or not, chances are they're not."

Jones said that may be true on the East Coast, but in L.A., it's not IF you wear thongs - because wearing them is right ALL of the time - but rather it's the TYPES of thongs that can make it right or wrong.

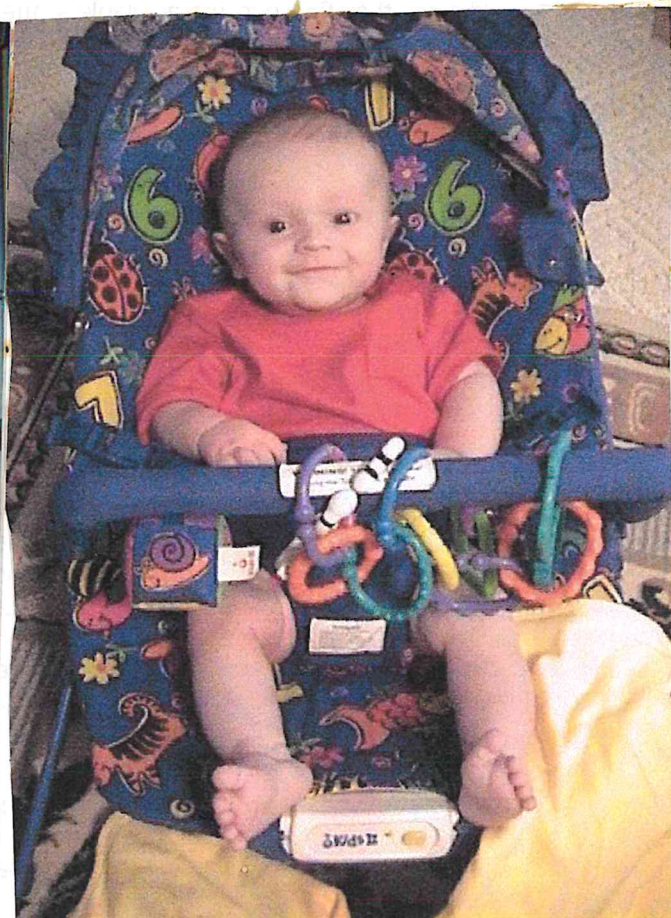
"It's the appropriate thong for the right situation," Jones said. "You'd wear, for example, (with an evening gown) one with a satin finish with some jewels or a real colorful plastic with glitter, not just plain flip flops."

How long will we be flipping over thongs? Not long, said Goldstein.

"A trend builds and really never goes out of style, but in this particular case, it's a fad, not a trend," Goldstein said. "It started last year, and now it's exploded this season. Next season ... it probably won't be around."

Not so, said Jones - on the West Coast anyway.

"In my opinion, you may still see them in Tucson, but not in New York proper," he said. "They will be around, at least for another season."



The Catfight Over ... Flip-Flops

by Bonnie Vaughan

New York Observer, 05/26/2003

"It's the first time one shoe has caused this kind of frenzy," said Sigerson Morrison P.R. manager Barbara Parisotto. She was referring to a coveted new warm-weather item: the kitten-heel rubber flip-flop. On the chilly morning of April 25, in fact, a dozen women were lined up outside Sigerson Morrison on Mott Street, eager to pay \$85 to score a pair on the first day they went on sale. The entire shipment of 350 sold out that day; 140 pairs were already spoken for by shoppers who had placed their orders as early as December. On Vivre.com, 2,867 pairs have been sold since they first became available at the end of March. With new shipments now trickling into the Nolita store, hundreds of New York women on the waiting list will finally be able to get their hands on them.

The success of Sigerson Morrison's haute flip-flop—it has the dolled-up, slightly unnerving aura of a child beauty-pageant contestant—is just more evidence that this lowly former poolside accessory has become a high-end wardrobe staple. Over at Scoop, Helmut Lang's suitably stark, flat rendition goes for a cool \$125. Manolo Blahnik, Karl Lagerfeld, Celine and Gucci all do versions of the flip-flop.

The sheer variety of flip-flops available now is staggering. There's the standard model done by the likes of Old Navy and J. Crew. There are, of course, Havaianas, the *über*-trendy Brazilian brand of flip-flop that come in edible candy colors and were also featured, adorned with Swarovski crystals, in goodie bags for this year's female Oscar nominees. There are tarted-up flip-flops from Charlotte Ronson, whose styles come in fabrics like cotton and macramé and are embellished with polka dots, ribbons and hibiscus-flower accents; Mella, who provides options in canvas, ultrasuede, terrycloth and denim; Scoop, who does them in velvet; and Coach, whose leather flip-flops sport a fetching sunflower at the big toe.

Every year, flip-flop fever seems to kick off earlier. This time around, beginning in still-freezing March, Premature Outdoor Flip-Flop Syndrome (POFFS) swept through the city as women eagerly went full frontal, their flip-flops smick-smacking against their winter-white feet. Ever since, throughout this stubbornly sub-par spring, these women have been pairing their flip-flops with knee-length skirts, boot-cut trousers, chic shirt-dresses, cropped cargo pants and, on frigid days—absurdly—with coats, sweaters, scarves and hats. Some are even committing such horrendous faux pas as wearing them with business suits, or flaunting flip-flop-shod feet that are crying out—heaving with sobs, in fact—for a fresh pedicure.

The skirt might be Marni, or the pants Marc Jacobs, but the attitude is: I didn't really try that hard. "It's like, 'I'm too cool for this,'" said Ji Baek, founder and owner of the downtown Rescue Beauty Lounge nail salons, with a healthy hint of mockery. "I don't want to wear my Blahniks right now. I'm just hangin'." It's a studied nonchalance that says, *Hey, look at me, I'm all cute and slouchy—and I'm still stylin'!*

A recent Sunday stroll around Soho—the temperature peaking at a relatively modest 70 degrees—confirmed that POFFS was in full effect, as roughly one in five females out on the streets sported flip-flops. The line between stylish and slovenly, however, was a fine one. For every girl who pulled off that certain flip-flop *je ne sais quois*, there were dozens who, slip-slapping by in their dirty-wash denim, dingy tank tops and reckless ponytails, missed the point entirely.

Explanations for choosing to wear flip-flops varied. Lisa, 27, who wouldn't give her last name but said she works in "luxury goods," was wearing lightweight, cropped gray pinstriped trousers deliberately dressed down by her plain white Havaianas. "I don't like to wear regular shoes," she declared with finality. Leslie McKeown, 32, a retail consultant who was in a knee-length jersey skirt, T-shirt, denim jacket and green leather Calypso thongs, claimed that her decision to wear flip-flops is all about convenience. "I wear them around the house, so it's easier to go

outside wearing them," she said.

On a recent nippy, 55-degree Thursday in Chelsea, freelance photographer Tanzie Johnson, 31—heading out for the evening in a pleated denim skirt, beige twill military jacket and orange Old Navy flip-flops—said that her primary concern was comfort. Although, she admitted, "I'm a little bit sorry I have them on today. I thought it was nice out and it's not. I'm *freezing*."

Blame the long, hard winter for this year's eager and often unseemly flip-flop embrace. Still, the question must be asked: Now that we have to go outside to smoke like Californians, do we have to give up and dress like them, too?

Some trace the flip-flop's rise as a daily urban-footwear option back to the era of heroin chic, around 1996 or 1997. According to Sasha Charnin Morrison, fashion market director at Allure, that was when J. Crew introduced the single-color rubber flip-flop with thong, straps and sole—coordinated in matching shades of white, red, black and navy—that distinguished it from its poorer, \$2.99 drugstore relation with its tell-tale white foot bed. "I remember the frenzy on that," Ms. Morrison recalled fondly, "and having to buy all the colors."

It's fashion-industry types who take credit for the flip-flop's bold move from locker room to office. Lord knows, after everything she's been through, the New York fashionista has a right to relax a little. "Our feet really hurt right now, O.K.?" said Kate Dimmock, fashion market director for *Marie Claire*, who also confessed to signing up on the Sigerson Morrison waiting list. "There's been a lot of heels going on and, you know, not everyone can make it to the celebrity podiatrist."

Ms. Morrison, who admitted to having "so many pairs of flip-flops, it's ridiculous," described a typical summer scenario. "You're wearing certain shoes that you thought were gonna work that day, and then your feet get so hot on the pavement that you're starting to get blisters," she recounted. "That blister in the summer really is the worst. And you need relief immediately. And you are walking down the street, and every other store has some version of the flip-flop. You see those flip-flops—they're *eyeing* you. And even if you're somewhat dressed for the evening, you could get away with a silver one or a gold one. And nine times out of 10, you will find it."

But of course, busy, sore-footed, be-blistered fashionistas cannot fail to note that the look has caught on with the masses—hence the scores of women flat-footing it through midtown in flip-flops and smart office clothes. "Right now, the assistants are wearing them to the office," said Ms. Dimmock. "Most editors don't wear Seven jeans anymore, because every assistant wears Seven jeans. So, as an editor, you have to be more selective about your flip-flop wearing." Such as, she said, limiting flip-flops to days when you want to sneak out for a pedicure—"No one's going to be the wiser if you wear those shoes," Ms. Dimmock promised—or on summer Fridays, which, she said, makes the following statement: "I'm not going on any appointments, I'm not meeting anyone for lunch; I'm here to do a little paperwork and then out the door to get on the Jitney or the train or whatever." Summer weekends in the city, though, are another story, as flip-flops break down caste barriers. "If you walk around Nolita post-Memorial Day, every girl's wearing the same outfit," opined Ms. Dimmock. "It's either a bias-cut skirt or a little sundress with flip-flops. It's a uniform."

But Ms. Baek, of Rescue, has noticed a definite fallout to the flip-flop trend. First, there's the issue of filthier, rattier feet. "Omigod!" she groaned. "There's nothing as embarrassing or unelegant or unsexy or wretchedly ugly and unattractive as black heels when you see people walk. Like, to me, I cringe—like, 'Oh, gross!'" And that's just the beginning: "Rubber flip-flops are wretched for your feet. I hate those things," she lamented. "The worst thing about them is that when you walk, there's no heel gravity. You constantly clack on your heel with the rubber sole and—guess what?—you make the callous a lot thicker and harder."

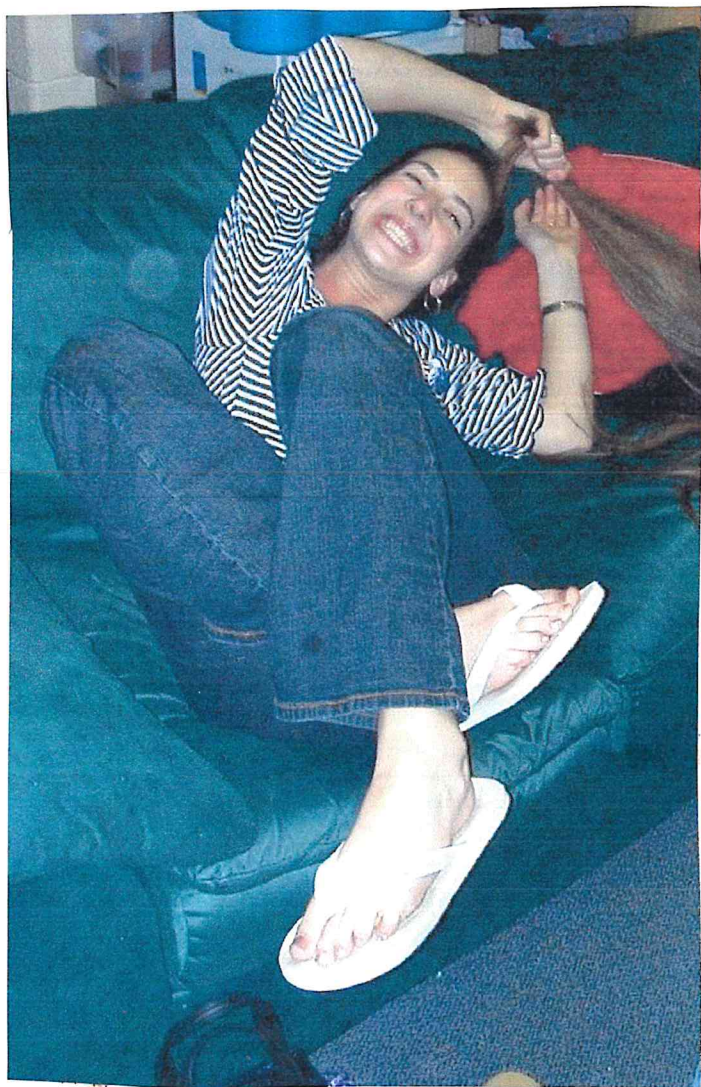
This is why Ms. Baek says she has designed her own line of flip-flops. "I made mine in terrycloth, so it doesn't hurt and get blistered in between the toes. And they're washable. I have to tell my clients to wash them."

When it comes to educating her flip-flop-obsessed clients, who blithely spend their days accumulating all that New York City grime on their feet, Ms. Baek has her work cut out for her. "Some people don't even take a shower at night," she said with unbridled disgust. "The thought of that just blows my mind away. I made these individual

bacteria wipes so they could wipe their feet. We sell them 30 per pack, so customers can carry it with them. Don't be a dirty girl! Wipe it down! Don't wait till you get home! I do these products because I get so frustrated."

Given the filthy downside, why have the girls gone wild for flip-flops? Letitia Baldrige, the author of 18 books on manners, former social secretary at the White House and chief of staff for Jacqueline Kennedy, has a theory. "It's part of a grimy, show-off-your-body, bare-skin thing," she seethed. "Look at the bare navels. Look at the girls wearing their slacks down to just above the pubic region. It's dis-*gus*-ting what's going on." Ms. Baldrige believes that women who wear flip-flops have a fetishistic agenda: They want their feet worshipped. "They make noise, they announce they're coming with their flip-flops, and then the eye travels down to the feet," she said. "They *want* you to look at their feet."

As a fashion editor who may have had some responsibility for creating flip-flop fever, Ms. Morrison has some rules. "You should get your feet to the pedicurist," she instructed. "You should clean them up." She is equally emphatic about the noise issue. "The shuffling and the smacking and the sliding of the feet—it makes people crazy," she complained. "Just pick up your feet, girls! Even though it's nice and floppy, there is something nails-on-the-chalkboard about it. Don't go there." And, finally, for all those feet dragged from their winter cocoons and thrust out into the open like naked mole rats blinking in the sunlight, she is adamant: "Get a really good self-tanner."



A Fashion Flip(Flop)

By Leanne Potts

Albuquerque Journal, May 18, 2003

"I blew out my flip-flop/ stepped on a pop-top ... " You know the rest of this song, of course — Jimmy Buffett's 1977 chestnut "Margaritaville," which tells of a mood-disordered alcoholic who has lost his way in life and now lazes seaside in plastic shoes probably purchased at a convenience store.

The shoes are the telling detail, proof that the song's protagonist has slipped from stability into a downward spiral of apathy and self-abnegation. This guy is so defeated he doesn't even bother to get dressed anymore; he just sits around with booze in the blender and crappy shoes on his feet.

Flip-flops have long been the official footwear of the disaffected, a sort of sack cloth for the tootsies. Wearing them says you are more concerned with feeling good than looking good, that you aren't even in the mood to be attractive, damn it.

Which is why news that the fashion world has gotten its manicured hands on the lowly flip-flop is so stunning. Yes, fashion has co-opted the flip-flop.

Did you ever think you would see the words "fashion" and "flip-flop" in the same sentence?

Me neither.

Yet in boutiques and on fashion Web sites across the nation, designers are slapping their logo on the onomatopoeically named flip-flops, tagging them with the more upscale-sounding name "thong" and selling them at prices that would buy Buffett's beach bum a season's worth of tequila.

Burberry has a flip-flop with its trademark plaid encased in a clear plastic footbed. Price: \$85. Pucci is making a terry-cloth flip-flop with its trademark psychedelic print. Price: \$170.

Helmut Lang has a rubber flip-flop virtually indistinguishable from the ones you can get at beachside T-shirt shops. Price: \$125. And a little design house called Sigerson Morrison has slapped a kitten heel on a rubber flip flop and is selling it for \$85 a pop.

Here's how affected the flop has become: Hollywood fashion princess Gwyneth Paltrow was photographed in a pair of flip-flops — and not by paparazzi.

Something deeply nutty is going on here.

Fashion experts explain the flip-flop phenomena thusly: Months and months of bad news and uncertainty has turned us into a nation of depressed slobs.

"The economic bad news is driving this," says Sharon Haver, editor of New York-based focusonstyle.com. "People don't know what is going to happen next in the world and they're looking for comfort. Flip-flops are comfort shoes, the mashed potatoes of fashion."

A plausible theory, but paying \$150 for plastic shoes is about as comforting as the bill for your maxed-out credit card. If you're worried you might get laid off, do you really want to wear Gucci flip-flops to the unemployment office?

Yes, you do, say those who have their fingers on the pulse of the under-30 set who have made flip-flops trendy.

"With their attitude of a great future and bull-market upbringing ... this generation's appetite for brands is unwavering," says Greg Casto, assistant account executive with Loren/Allan/Odioso, a Cincinnati marketing firm that focuses on selling to Generation Y.

Kids of the '90s economic boom want to wear aggressively unfashionable shoes, Casto says, but they want them to have designer logos on them. They want to slum.

To meet the hunger for upscale downscale, designers have turned out versions of other erstwhile cheap shoes. Chanel is making a \$150 shoe that looks a whole lot like the classic wood-soled Dr. Scholls sandal (\$9 at drugstores in the 1970s) and Michael Kors has a \$40 jelly shoe.

The proper attire to wear with slumming shoes: suits, skirts or any other outfit that looks obviously ludicrous when paired with rubber shoes. "One girl in our office wore a darling, obviously expensive black suit ... with pink flip-flops," says Karla Neely, who works at a Dallas public relations agency.

It's anti-fashion as fashion. The key to flip-flop chic is an insouciant understanding that, for women over 30, i.e., your mother, wearing flip-flops to the office is the equivalent of coming to work with your hair in curlers.

"It says 'I am so cool I can wear this cheap-looking shoe and still look good,' " Haver says.

Flip-flop chic also fits into a history of flat shoes being popular in economic downturns, says Gina Pia Cooper, editor of the online magazine FashionFinds.com. The last time flats were in style was during the recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s, Cooper says.

"When the economy is flat and the mood is flat, women don't feel like they don't want to wear high heels," she says. "Instead of putting forth a too-high-fashiony look, flat shoes are a compromise."

Naturally, there are knockoff flip-flops that sell for far less than the designer models. Which is weird, because the designers were copying cheap flip-flops when they made their pricey versions.

For those who have too little money (or too much sense) to pay designer prices but want to get in on flip-flop chic, there are flops in the \$12 to \$40 range that have been dolled up with sequins, plastic fruit and beading.

For those who are feeling flip-floppy but not flat, there are an array of platform flip-flops out there, too.

For those with ultimate confidence, there are still flip-flops available in under-\$5 range. Walgreen's and Smith's are selling the good old \$2.99 models that will enable you to look authentically poor.

Cooper, who must be the planet's most heretical fashion writer, says cheap flops are the way to go.

"There are idiot fashion victims out there who will buy (a \$125 flip-flop) because it has 'Helmut Lang' on it," she says. "Don't be ridiculous. Get a glue gun and stick some sequins or something on a pair of flip flops from Target. It's cooler to be creative and save money than to spend money on a name."

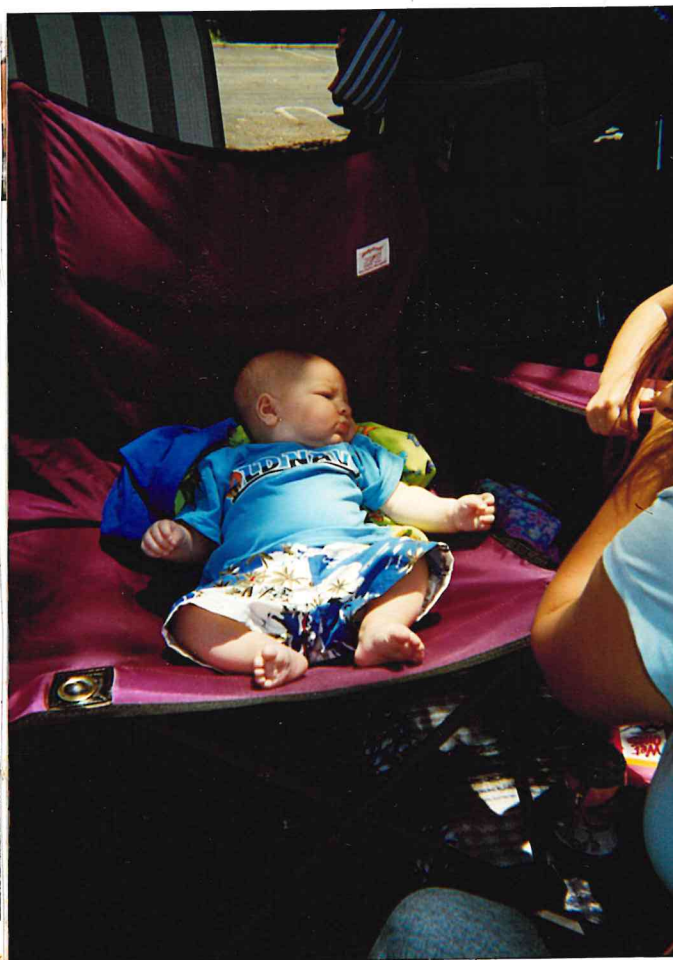


Bronx Cheer--This is **Mariann Isaacs**, a resident of **Costa Mesa, California** who was born in **The Bronx, New York** in 1952--in a hospital about two miles from historic **Yankee Stadium**. Mariann is pictured at home in Costa Mesa from December, 1996--without her shoes! She attends meetings at the Jewish Community Center each month.

Flip-flop summer *New*

Spotlight Online, 05/28/2003

The simple rubber flip-flop shoe is causing a shopping frenzy in Manhattan, reports the The New York Observer. On a recent morning, a dozen women were lined up outside the Sigerson Morrison shop on Mott Street, eager to pay \$85 for a pair. On Vivre.com, 2,867 pairs have been sold since they first became available. The success of Sigerson Morrison's flip-flops shows that this former poolside accessory has become an essential wardrobe item. Helmut Lang's flip-flops sell for a cool \$125 and Manolo Blahnik, Karl Lagerfeld and Gucci all do versions. Why have the girls gone wild for flip-flops? Letitia Baldrige, author of 18 books on manners, believes that women who wear flip-flops want their feet worshipped. "They make noise, they announce they're coming with their flip-flops, and then the eye travels down to the feet," she said.



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A triumph of engineering - flip-flops with heels

By Helen Kirwan-Taylor

Telegraph.co.uk, May 2003

Fashion and design have long been interlinked, but who would have thought that a plastic flip-flop would create major ripples across both industries?

The new kitten-heel thong by Kari Sigerson and Miranda Morrison has not only reduced women to tears - there's a long waiting list in both Britain and the States - but left the high and mighty Italian design manufacturers such as Magis and Kartell wondering just how the women managed to pull it off.

The industrial process required to produce these hot new shoes is normally the preserve of men in white lab coats with PhDs, not women with fashion degrees in shoemaking.

The £70 flip-flops, which come in seven colours (white, black, brown, green, orange, red and pink), have taken America by storm.

"You have no idea what's going on here," says the Manhattan-based, British-born Miranda Morrison.

"We just shipped 300 pairs to our New York shop and they were gone in two-and-a-half hours. There was a queue forming around the store, and women were bursting into tears when we told them that we had run out of supplies."

Although made from the same semi-solid plastic as some of the furniture I saw at the Milan Furniture Fair three weeks ago, the shoe doesn't look or feel like plastic, which is part of the appeal.

It is the first rubber flip-flop to be mounted on a heel, and is a complex piece of design. If it weren't a flip-flop, I would have suspected that it was the work of Britain's number one designer Jasper Morrison, who happens to be Miranda's brother.

The idea was conceived by Kari Sigerson four years ago. The first attempts to develop a prototype came with warnings such as "Don't stand on it too hard: just rest your foot and squint."

"The design process was endless," says Morrison. "The technical challenge was huge and everybody said it wasn't worth our while to continue. The problem was the stability: we couldn't find a construction that could withstand the weight of the person."

Sigerson and Morrison went to German trade fairs to research the moulding methods of gum boots, and interviewed Egyptian companies about sheet plastic. Eventually, Morrison and Sigerson discovered Vibram, the Italian makers of the world's best soles who, says Sigerson, "took our calls, set up a meeting and gave us a chance to talk to their research and development team".

The talk soon centred on injection moulds and polycarbonate components (more Jasper's milieu than Miranda's).

"It was dizzying," says Miranda. "The conversations all took place in Italian and the level of technical knowledge we needed just to follow a conversation was beyond us. This is a completely different animal to anything we've ever done. Fashion is a six-month cycle: this is an industrial process."

Each shoe is made up of a dual injection TPU sole and a PVC thong, and has to be made in a single mould which needs to be cleaned for 24 hours between processes because of the change of colour. As a result, the engineers are working faster than they ever have before. "They're working 24 hours a day and six days a week to keep up with demand," says Morrison. "They're producing 2,500 pairs of flip-flops a week but it's nowhere near enough."

With summer on the horizon, Sigerson Morrison have decided to open a boutique in Sag Harbor, New York, dedicated exclusively to the flip-flops.

They'll have to keep those Italians working overtime because no one ever walks away from the stores with just one pair.

"I guess this is our summer," says Miranda. "This is the right shoe at the right time and at the right price."



FLIP-FLOPS FEVER *New*

They're casual, they're dressy and they're just about everywhere.

By **SUSAN MARTIN**, News Style Writer

Buffalo News, 6/13/2003

Molly Quillowns at least nine pairs of them. Abby Maxian wears hers with sweats around campus. Kristin Algoe pairs hers with dresses, skirts and just about everything else in her closet. Now that warm weather is here, people have flipped over flip-flops. Over the last few years, flip-flops have grown increasingly fashionable and popular for street wear. They reveal their soles on school campuses, in malls, at restaurants, even at weddings.

Just don't call them a fashion fad. To fans, flip-flops are a wardrobe staple. "I wear them every day in the summer. They are easy to put on and off, and they are not as binding as shoes. I love wearing them," said Kristin Algoe, a student at the University at Buffalo School of Medicine. "They're cheap and comfortable," added Mariola Karbowski, a fellow medical student sporting \$7 flip-flops from Target. Part of the appeal, too, is that stores such as Old Navy, Gap, American Eagle and others offer flip-flops that coordinate with their clothes. Who can resist - when the cost of outfitting the feet can be less than \$15? These days, even big-name designers such as Manolo Blahnik have versions of the style for the couture crowd - and you can bet they don't cost \$15.

A Sigerson Morrison kitten-heel flip-flop selling for \$85 is all the rage among fashionistas. And for those who prefer surfing the net to cruising the malls, there's www.FlipFlopTrunkShow.com. And then there is the Spa, by Bonjour Fleurette, a rubber flip-flop with a wide band covered with flowers. "It was on 'Sex and the City'; in O, the Oprah magazine; on the 'Oprah Winfrey Show,' and on her 'O List' (Oprah's favorite things)," said Tricia Kelly, of Tricia's Shoes, in the Walker Center, Williamsville. "You can't believe the excitement. They come in green, orange, gold, black and fuchsia. They're comfy and adorable. Oprah calls them the 'Pedicure Shoes'," said Kelly, who sells them for \$22 a pair. Advice from Kelly: "To wear your flip-flops you need your toe ring. Then, again, Kelly nearly flipped when she heard her daughter was considering wearing flip-flops to go formal. "I gave her a look, like, 'My daughter is NOT wearing flip-flops to the senior prom!," Kelly said. Indeed, not all flip-flops are created equal. There are the standard versions but also flip-flops reinvented in terry cloth or leather, with adornments such as ribbons, beads and flowers. At ShoeFly, on Elmwood Avenue, owner Sue Marfino recalled how one customer bought a pair of \$42 black leather flip-flops, its straps fashioned to look like elongated leaves and pink stems. "She planned to wear them to a wedding with a black dress and pink shawl," Marfino said, adding that, with the advent of dressy flip-flops, such pairings have become popular and acceptable. Other styles at the shop include casual rubber flip-flops with colorful postage stamp patterns, \$15; a preppy-inspired leather version with striped ribbon straps, \$35; flip-flops for men, and more.

That's not to say that many flip-flops out there don't put the "Ds" in Dressing Down. Buffalo State College student Abby Maxian, a political science major, was spotted earlier this week wearing casual flip-flops from Express, barely visible underneath her gray sweat pants with runaway hems. "This is a lazy look," she said, her friends nodding in agreement. And, in fact, there are various categories. "When you live on campus, you need shower sandals, too. So you have your shower sandals and then you have your assortment of flip-flops," said Nikki De Vito, an elementary education major at Buffalo State College, who owns about six pairs. De Vito further points out that while some guys may wear flip-flops, the ones she knows prefer a more masculine sandal, such as something by Adidas or Nike. Maxian's black flip-flops sport a thicker sole, which further sets it apart from its five-and-dime predecessors. Thick soles also describe the flip-flops donned by Molly Quill, owner of Quill's Apothecary, a face, bath and body products specialty store on Elmwood Avenue. Quill is a full-fledged fan of flip-flops. She owns nine pairs ranging from casual to dressy, and she keeps three different styles at the store to make sure she has the perfect pair to match her outfit. She even wears them at home when she and her husband have friends over for cocktails or dinner to create that "kind of hostess pajama-y look," she said. Thinking back five years, Quill recalls the first time she stepped out in the sort of thick-soled flip-flops so common now. She wore them with a long straight skirt and a tank top. People stopped her on the street to ask where she acquired such outlandish footwear, with its almost cartoonish quality. Then there was her father's reaction. "My Dad is so preppy and conservative. He took a look at me as if to say, "My daughters are so weird."" Of course, several things come between flip-flops and those considering wear them. Although many flip-flop wearers find them comfortable, others hear "thong" and think blisters between the toes. And then there's the whole matter of exposing one's feet to the entire world. In comparison, even today's must-have mules cover less-than-perfectly-pedicured digits. Furthermore, flip-flop wearers acknowledge that their feet meet more dirt. But the solution is simple: Wash them. Often. "I own a bath store. I can wash my feet whenever I want to," Quill said.



Footloose: Flip-flops, open-toe sandals summer shoe-ins *New*

BY ALYSON WARD

Knight Ridder Newspapers, June 13, 2003

We've always been tempted to go barefoot in the summer. Lucky for us, that can almost be arranged this year.

Flip-flops and slides, sandals and mules rule the day -- for women and men -- and it looks like they're here to stay.

Yes, the flip-flop, once relegated to the beach bag and the back yard, has turned out to be more than a one-summer fashion fling. They've hung around so many years, flip-flops have become their own category of warm-weather shoes -- as respectable as mules and as common as loafers.

How did the delicate, insubstantial flip-flop manage to single-handedly stop the revolving door of fashion?

Practicality. And comfort.

The barely-there shoe just makes sense, says Liz Epstein, co-owner of FlipFlopTrunkShow.com, an Internet-based "flip-flop boutique."

"In the summer, you want the least on you that you can have," she says.

Besides, flip-flops have evolved in the past few years -- they're no longer so cheap and disposable. In fact, they've even gone high-fashion, Epstein points out; now flip-flops are designed by Manolo Blahnik, Jimmy Choo and Helmut Lang.

"I sell some really dressy flip-flops," Epstein says -- including many to brides and bridesmaids.



Falling for flip-flops **New**

Timeless footwear more popular than ever, with scads of styles on shelves

By Jennifer Jett

ARIZONA DAILY STAR, 10 June 2003

Tucson may not have a beach, but flip-flops - named for the familiar sound of rubber coming off steaming asphalt and slapping your heel - are a common sight and a carefree way to keep feet cool.

"It's about as close to being barefoot as possible," said Georgeanne Fimbres, who teaches fashion design at Pima Community College's West Campus.

In the past year, department-store sales of thong footwear, which include flip-flops, topped 4 million pairs, according to NPD Fashionworld, a consumer tracking company.

Retire those neutral colors for the summer - flip-flop wearers are brightening up their shoe racks with bold blues, greens and yellows. And there's certainly no lack of choice: We counted 85 different styles and colors at Old Navy alone.

"They go great with every outfit - with jeans, shorts, skirts," said Michelle Flores, co-manager at Express in the Tucson Mall, 4500 N. Oracle Road. "People end up buying like 10 of them, (one) for every color of shirt that they have."

Flip-flops are especially popular in a casual city like Tucson, said Flores, who estimated the shoes make up about 20 percent of sales at Express.

"(It's) definitely a style that people today wear with a lot of different types of clothing, so that makes them versatile, and you see a lot more differentiation in materials," Fimbres said. "That same style of shoe is being done in silk, is being done in a lot of natural materials."

Because most pairs are easy on the wallet (starting at \$2.99 at Target), flip-flop lovers can expand their collections to include shoes adorned with sequins, beads and flowers. They're also easy to replace.

"I had about four pairs until my husband's dog chewed them all up," said student

Kathy Ware as she perused the selection at Old Navy. "So now he has to buy me new ones."

Ware, 22, said she prefers flat, solid-colored flip-flops.

"I wear them all the time," she said. "They're the easiest shoes to put on. And if you have a lot of colors, they match with anything."

Flip-flops are also going upscale, said Jackie Robbins, who co-founded the Web site flipfloptrunkshow.com three years ago.

"At this point now three years later, every major designer is making flip-flops," she said, "from the dime-store flip-flops all the way to Sigerson Morrison and Manolo Blahnik."

Nobody ever orders just one pair from the Web site, Robbins said, and customers report owning between 15 and 30 pairs of flip-flops. The Web site's selection of shoes ranges in price from \$10 to \$155.

Even stores such as Just For Feet are joining the fun. The nationwide athletic shoe chain began carrying flip-flops two years ago, said Matt Gigstad, director of the store at 5566 E. Broadway.

"Company-wide they saw a growing trend in flip-flops coming back into fashion," he said.

While flip-flops are not a primary item at Just For Feet, they often catch the eyes of customers as a last-minute buy. Gigstad said the store receives the order in early May, and within three months the shoes are sold out.

The barely there style leaves plenty of exposed foot to decorate.

"They definitely show off the toes, which are really a high spot right now in terms of pedicures and fancy toes, toe rings and foot jewelry," Fimbres said. "I think this year especially it feels wonderful to say, 'Summer's here, throw off your big boots and shoes, and we can dance around and celebrate the summer.'"

Summer's time to flip over flops *New*

Once just for the beach, thong sandals are now becoming everyday wear

By Kimberly E. Mock

Athens Banner-Herald, Sunday, July 6, 2003

They began as a simple concept on the beaches of Brazil: cheap but comfortable footwear that left toes happy and the wallet heavy. But in the 40-plus years since flip-flops were introduced to the masses, the veritable summer footwear of choice has gone from beach sand to city sidewalks, and is even taking a turn on the red carpets of Hollywood and in many a fashion house.

This year, shoe magnet Jimmy Choo and fashion houses Helmut Lang and Hermes are introducing their own brands of designer thongs.

And if local buyers are any indication, the trend doesn't show any sign of slowing.

According to John Widmer, co-owner of the Encore boutique on East Clayton Street, the low-end footwear trend hasn't escaped the Classic City.

"It started off about five years ago," Widmer said of the current flip-flop trend. "We didn't have them that early - we only got into it two years ago - but they started selling immediately."

The most popular flip-flop at Encore? California-bred Reef sandals.

"The most popular line here is the Reefs," Widmer said. "We probably have 20 styles and colors."

He notes flip-flops' go-with-anything styling (as well as their affordable price) makes the footwear a practical choice for cash-strapped collegiates or Georgians just looking to stay cool in the summer months.

"When school's in, we're selling them," Widmer said. "We've sold several pairs today. In the summertime in the South, girls just love wearing shorts with flip-flops. Even in the winter, people are looking ahead and buying them."

But according to Irvin Alhadeff, owner of Masada Leather & Outdoor, flip-flops are a large part of the modern man's wardrobe as well.

"We sell a lot of flip-flops to guys," said Alhadeff, whose East Clayton Street store has sold footwear for nearly 30 years. "There's been a definite increase (in flip-flop sales) in the last three years, but it's just exploded in the past year."

Alhadeff said his main customers are young men, ages 14 to 24, with whom flip-flops by Reef, Teva and Rainbow are popular in basic colors like black and navy blue.

Alhadeff notes the flops are popular not only for their versatility, but also because of their affordability.

"(Flip-flops) have the advantage of being low-cost, but high-quality," Alhadeff said.

The popularity of flops with Athens footwear fashionistas is music to the ears of Dr. Arvid Vasenden, an Athens podiatrist who notes fashion's current shoe du jour is also a good choice for healthy feet.

"I think they're absolutely great," Vasenden said of flip-flops. "We have far less problems with flip-flops than with other shoes."

Vasenden said he's never seen a foot problem caused by flip-flops, save the occasional blister between the wearer's toes, which is caused by the shoe's thong strap.

And contrary to the flimsy footwear's lore, people with high or low arches still should be able to take part in the flop trend.

"I think with (problem) arches, it's not going to make a bit of difference" if you wear flip-flops or not, Vasenden said.

Though flops come in a variety of styles - some have thick, block-like soles, while other have cushy, cardboard-thin undersurfaces - Vasenden said the thicker the shoes' soles, the more cushioned the feet are.

"From a podiatrist's point of view, we'd like to have a mattress under your feet," Vasenden said, "anything we can wear to protect our foot from civilization's surfaces, like concrete and asphalt."

Still not sold on the flip-flop trend?

If not for comfort or fashion's sakes, flip-flops may help protect feet during Georgia's hot, humid weather by exposing them to fresh, cooler air.

"In our climate, the flip-flop actually can help protect feet from other foot ailments, such as athlete's foot and other fungal infections," Vasenden said. "(By) wearing enclosed shoes, when it's 100 degrees out, it's at least 110 degrees in your shoes, and fungus loves an incubator."

Flip-Flop Fly *New*

By Mery Galanternick

Latintrade.com, July 01, 2003

Havaianas, Brazil's ubiquitous rubber sandals, were once the exclusive footwear of housekeepers, peasants, dockworkers and other poor people. Like blue jeans in the United States, at one time the province of miners and laborers, they've blossomed into both everyday wear and high fashion. U.S. actress Sandra Bullock recently wore Havaianas with an evening gown, and now the casual shoes—often generically called flip-flops in English because of the sound they make on your feet when walking—clack regularly down the fashion world's catwalks.

A slab of rubber with a V-shaped strap clenchd between the first two toes, Havaianas debuted in 1962, inspired by the footwear of Japanese farm workers. The name, Portuguese for Hawaiians, was selected because, at the time, that's where Americans spent their vacations. "Havaianas today is a Brazilian icon as Swatch is for Switzerland and Coke for the U.S.," says Rui Porto, communication director for São Paulo Alpargatas, the sporting goods and industrial fabric company that manufactures the thong shoes.

In 1994, São Paulo Alpargatas decided to market the sandals to Brazil's previously stand-offish bourgeoisie. "We eliminated the middle class's shame of wearing Havaianas," explains Porto. The basic sandal remained the same but now come in red, blue, dark green and fuchsia, some with floral designs on the sole or crystals on the straps. The bottoms were made thicker and more comfortable.

Alpargatas reported US\$251.6 million in revenues in 2002, 45% of it from the sales of the rubber sandals. Profits rose to \$14 million, 46% higher than in 2001.

In 2000 Havaianas, already widely copied around the world, officially went global. "The strategy was simple," says Angela Hirata, Alpargatas' director of foreign trade. "Having the brand name in the low-end market, all we needed was to put it in the high-end market as well. That way, the middle class would jump in." It worked.

Hirata traveled to Paris, Milan and Tokyo, approaching upscale fashion retailers. At the Gallerie Lafayette in Paris, Hirata organized an event where customers were given the chance to assemble their own flip-flops. In Brazil, the basic version of the shoes cost from US\$1.50 to \$6. In chic Beverly Hills, California, price tags range from \$11 to \$75.

Wal-mart? Nope. Last year, 50 models paraded in Havaianas at the summer show of French designer Jean Paul Gaultier. Today, jewel-encrusted versions of the Brazilian flip-flops, bearing labels like Gucci and Chanel, are sold in 45 countries. Havaianas exports skyrocketed from zero only three years ago to 20 million pairs last year. Exports right now make up only 5% of production; Hirata plans to push that to 15% by 2004.

The shoemaker is consciously carving out a top-end market. Hirata says she turned down U.S. retailer Wal-Mart's request to add the flip-flops to its shelves. "It would be a lack of respect to our foreign customers," she says. "We don't want Havaianas to become a commodity."

In Brazil, stories about the flip-flops are legend. In one, three children in a poor family in Brazil's northeastern hinterlands share one pair among them; when one went to school, the others had to remain at home. Abroad, devotees include U.S. supermodel Naomi Campbell, who uses every trip to Brazil as an opportunity to buy dozens of pairs for friends. Until recently Brazilian model Giselle Bündchen was also a Havaiana fan. She now works for Grendene, the sandal-maker's largest competitor.

Forty-five-year-old Dani Gamerman, a professor of statistics at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, has worn Havaianas since he was a child. Once ridiculed for his fashion taste, he has had his revenge. Gamerman recently lectured at an international statistics congress in Spain wearing black flip-flops, wafer thin from use. "I'm totally faithful to them," he says. "But they must be genuine Havaianas."

Flip-flops gaining office popularity

'I often just wear them all day'

Reuter, July 22, 2003

Flip-flops in the nation's capital typically mean politicians switching positions on an important issue like abortion or taxes, but not this summer.

Instead, the flip-flop resonating in Washington and across the country is the snapping sound coming from women's feet as they adopt thong sandals as the comfortable shoes to wear to work, on a hot date or just to the grocery store.

"I walk to work in D.C. and in the spring, summer, and fall I often wear flip-flops on my commute," said Annie, who would not give her last name after discovering that her work employee manual says they are inappropriate attire.

"On days when I have no meetings or other client events and I'm wearing one of my dressier pairs, I often just wear them all day," she said, echoing other women interviewed.

Previously, as portrayed in the 1988 movie "Working Girl," women sought refuge from high heels by wearing sneakers during their commutes before switching shoes at the office.

But with summer temperatures in the upper 90s Fahrenheit, many women this year have broken that tradition by exchanging sneakers for a pair of flip-flops.

And the trend is spreading throughout the nation as women find the footwear comfortable and convenient.

"They dress up or down," said Lindsay Hanson, who wears flip-flops at least twice a week while working at the political consulting firm Grassroots Solutions in St. Paul, Minnesota, favoring Cole Haan and Steve Madden pairs.

"The more dressy styles make the statement that you are credible, yet still accessible," she said.

Office-wear nee beach-wear

And some admit to shunning all footwear except flip-flops, wearing them not just to work but almost everywhere.

"I find it difficult after a long weekend or evening of feet freedom to slip back into the typical work shoe," said Torrey Fazen, who works at a communications firm in Chicago. "I wear them every minute that I am not at work, so I am a bit of a flip-flop junkie."

Consumers can now find the office-wear nee beach-wear at outlets including discount stores and chic department stores. And women admitted spending anywhere from a few dollars to as much as \$125 for a pair.

Luxury retailer Saks Fifth Avenue offers an aerodynamic pair of leather Cole Haan flip-flops boasting "Nike Air technology" that run a cool \$145.

Another high-end model Saks offers is Sigerson Morrison rubber thongs which come with a 1.5-inch "kitten heel" for \$85, available in five different colors.

"Generally, I spend between \$10 to \$15 for them and most of my favorite ones have come from Target," said Annie who works as an educational meeting and event planner.

Hale Berk, a New Yorker who works in publishing said even the dirty city streets did not deter her from wearing flip-flops. "That's what the pedicure is for, nothing is keeping me away from those shoes," she said.

Grab those flip-flops: Surf's up in fashion world

By **LESLEY KENNEDY**

Rocky Mountain News , 29 July 2003

It doesn't matter that the closest you're going to get to hanging 10 is the wave pool at a water park - the nation is totally stoked over surfing and its carefree style.

From MTV's Surf Girls and The WB's Boarding House: North Shore to James Bond ripping in "Die Another Day" and Charlie's Angels tearing it up in "Full Throttle," surf fashion is scorching this summer.

Floral patterns, board shorts, cute T-shirts and flip-flops are flying off the shelves, and even checkerboard Vans - you know, those shoes Jeff Spicoli knocked against his skull in "Fast Times at Ridgemont High" ("That was my skull. I'm so wasted!") - are experiencing a comeback in fresh new colors.

If you saved your old Ocean Pacific T-shirts and tank tops, you're in luck. You're even luckier if you can find the old designs at thrift stores. But if you want something fresh, fashion's top designers sent waves of surf styles down their spring/summer runways.

There were neoprene wet suits at Balenciaga, surfer swimsuits and a logo surfboard at Chanel, neoprene jackets at Prada, graphic surf-style tops and bottoms at Luella Bartley, neoprene dresses at Louis Vuitton and floral beach-worthy tops at Miu Miu.

Perhaps the best thing about surf style is that it's so easy to incorporate into everyday fashion. If you're young, take a cue from brands such as Roxy and slip on a floral skirt, tank top, flip-flops and bag. If you're older, opt for just a cute bag or pair basics with a surf-inspired skirt or top.

And always wear flip-flops. If you just can't bring yourself to wear cheap rubber versions, try Sigerson Morrison's ultra-hot kitten-heel thong (\$85 at Saks Fifth Avenue) or Keds' lightweight version on sale now for \$20 at www.keds.com.

Or, if you have the spare cash, grab one of those Louis Vuitton dresses.

Because surf is definitely up, dude.



THINK SIMPLE FOR SUMMER STYLE

By Brooke Showell

Long Island Press, 3 July 2003

Since the days of beach blanket bingo, seaside fashion has always been a big hit of the summer. The best looks of the season will often be at the beach.

A favorite way to celebrate the few precious months of warm weather is to join the sun worshippers and sport simple summer style consisting of sandals, sarongs, bikinis and tank tops in bright colors and simple shapes. Toss out those tight, buttoned-up fashions and dress light and breezy with flowing cotton skirts, simple sundresses and sweet sandals.

Summer fashion has taken a turn toward casual cool and the most relaxed looks once reserved for weekends and summer rentals now appear on the snazziest dressers and the most urban environments. While it's hardly appropriate to show up at the office in a bikini and sarong, other styles formerly reserved for the beach have become summer wardrobe staples.

The flip-flop is one of this summer's biggest trends, having made its way into the season's most fashionable footwear. Rubber thongs are casual, comfortable, practical and inexpensive. Once strictly a beach statement, this laid-back look now appeals to all ages for all occasions. New Yorkers wear flip-flops with a bikini on the Montauk shore, or with a sundress on Madison Avenue. Even Sarah Michelle Gellar showed off white flip-flops with her Vera Wang wedding gown. Right now, there are no limitations when it comes to summer sandals.

Flip-flops range from high-end Helmut Lang rubber thongs and kitten-heeled Sigerson Morrison sandals to everyday options by J.Crew, Old Navy and Target. Adidas' high-tech flip-flops and the surf-friendly Reef Smoothy Sandals offer sportier selections for guys. But like all trends, the flip-flop has taken a trendy turn.

The ultra-hip Havaianas flip-flops have become a cult obsession. Created in 1962, this Brazilian company gained popularity after its shoes were spotted on celebrities and fashionistas. These Brazilian imports started showing up on U.S. shores when models like Gisele and Kate Moss

packed their suitcases full of sandals during photo shoots in South American. Made of Brazilian rubber, the Havaiana sandal comes in a rainbow of colors and prints, from pastel to floral, and is now being worn by everyone from supermodels to surfers. Celebrities at the Grammys were treated to a pair in their gift bags, and Oscar nominees were presented with a special Swarovski crystal version. Havaianas range from about \$12 to \$15 and are available in the New York area at Lord & Taylor, Scoop and a variety of specialty shops, like Island Surf in Sag Harbor and Great Shapes in Roslyn Harbor. Look for hot new Havaianas styles in early July.

The only question remaining is: What does one wear with a great pair of flip-flops? This season, there are no rules. Pair your thongs with anything from a pinstripe suit or a cocktail dress to Capri pants or jeans. But the best look of the summer, especially for those not headed to the office, is to throw on your flip-flops with the classics: the perfect bikini, sun hat and beach bag.

Everything goes for swimsuits this season, as long as it's fun and sexy. Get rid of those skirted one-piece swimsuits, and stock up on string bikinis and halter tanks. Make a statement with tropical prints and bright colors, or go for basic black and white. Whether you're headed to Sagg Main, Long Beach or a pool party in your own backyard, go for a bold waterside statement. Bikinis are big as always, and the maillot is going through a bit of a renaissance, as long as the print is fun and the shape is alluring. Tropical prints, preppy patterns and graphic designs are sure to stand out while sunbathing. Floral surf prints and scuba-inspired styles give a strong, sporty look to swimwear.

I would never survive the season without big, bold beach bags. A summer tote in a bright color or pretty pattern and a light fabric, like canvas or cotton, complements the simplest outfit. For an ultra-chic version sure to get glances on Shore Drive, head to Calypso in Southampton or East Hampton for Caribbean-colored finds. Or pick up a cheap and easy bag from any straw market. Use your beach bag as a tote during the rush-hour commute, take it with you on weekend excursions, or keep it in the trunk of your car for easy access.

Summer is here, so put away those hard-to-handle stilettos and brief-cases. Stock up on comfy flip-flops, easy bikinis and roomy tote bags, and hit the beach.



Flip-flops make fashionable impression

By SHAWN HUBLER

Los Angeles Times, July 31, 2003

Before Sarah Michelle Gellar wore white Mellas in her wedding; before pairs of Havaianas turned up, bejeweled, in goodie bags for this year's Oscar nominees; before an entire shipment of Sigerson Morrisons sold out in Manhattan on a single day in April - in short, before this became the Year of the Upmarket Flip-Flop - there were certain things that were only about the beach.

One was the soft, thwick-thwack of thong sandals slapping bare feet. Another was the cheap smell of new rubber footgear in baskets and dime store bins. "Go-aheads," Southern Californians called them in the 1950s, because they'd fall off your feet if you tried to walk backward; they were that poorly constructed.

Blisters formed where they split toes and rubbed tender insteps. Rare was the pair that went three weeks without breaking. Their sole promise - temporary, like so many things about summer - was that they'd keep the hot sand away from your skin.

Subliminally, though, they conveyed other signals that - again, like so many things about summer - have, over time, become commodified. They meant you were free, so free, in fact, that leisure could strike at any moment, so you'd better dress for it. That's what Californians of a certain age will tell you, because even here, fashion was not always open and easy. There was a time, even in sunny L.A., when people kept their toes to themselves when they weren't on vacation. Toes were personal. Toes were too much information. Toes had cleavage.

"At the beginning of the 20th century, women could not show their feet at all," said Mary Trasko, author of "Heavenly Soles," a history of footwear. "Feet were considered a very private part of the body." From the Middle Ages, in fact, a glimpse of a woman's foot in most places was tantamount to trespassing on another man's property.

Kevin Jones, curator of the museum at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles, says that toes made a brief reappearance after the French Revolution, but shoes were closed again by 1810. They stayed that way into the 20th century.

"Even in the '20s and '30s," Trasko said, "the clothes were very modest. It wasn't until things opened up and women's roles changed that they could show their feet in polite society."

But when the Italian-born shoemaker Salvatore Ferragamo arrived in Hollywood to make sandals for biblical epics - and inevitably for film stars - America was ready, said Jones. Open-toed shoes became popular, as did open-heeled mules and flat slippers; World War II veterans brought back Japanese zoris, and shoe manufacturers joined in postwar experimentation in industrial plastics. From these sweeping forces came the lowly flip-flop.

"I grew up in Laguna Beach in the 1950s, and I remember guys back from Japan wearing them after the Korean War," recalls surf promoter and historian Allan Seymour, who is now 60. "Up until then, people just wore these clunky leather sandals that we called 'Jesus Boots' in the '60s."

Whatever the source, he says, flip-flops quickly were absorbed into the informal landscape of surf culture - flimsy and loose in the '50s, the color of Popsicles in the '60s, then in every imaginable permutation, from bamboo to platforms. They crammed trinket shops in beach towns and littered landfills in autumn. They became, for most of America, what you put on when the season coaxed you out of your inhibitions.

"They were the closest you could come," Seymour explains, "to bare feet."

But flip-flops still were just summer shoes for most of the country until the 1990s changed workplace fashion, some believe permanently. The dot-com revolution made overnight millionaires of 20-year-olds steeped in West Coast youth culture who wanted to know why they shouldn't wear what they chose to the office.

Corporations loosened dress codes and declared Casual Fridays. Fashion, as ever, followed the money: Now there was status in dressing as if work were just something to pop in on between yoga classes. Now dressing for success meant dressing as if leisure could strike at any moment. Summer was not just summer; summer was subtext.

"Suddenly," said Trasko, "every day was Casual Friday. And of course, never say never in fashion, but there has really been no going back."

For trend-followers, change has meant a sudden run on the beach's once-least-remarkable footwear. Havaianas - \$3 Brazilian flip-flops of synthetic rubber that, for more than three decades, were the footwear of Sao Paulo peasants - took off after supermodels such as Kate Moss sang their praises last year. In bright colors for \$10-\$15 a pair, or studded with Swarovski crystals for \$150, they've shown up during the past year at the Cannes Film Festival and on the catwalk of designer Jean-Paul Gaultier. Exports - which were at zero three years ago - soared to 20 million pairs last year.

Sigerson Morrison's \$85 rubber flip-flop with the kitten heel has repeatedly sold out at high-end boutiques. The season has also unveiled new Chanel flip-flops, Manolo Blahnik flip-flops, Gucci flip-flops, even Birkenstock flip-flops. Mella makes them in terrycloth and canvas. Coach is selling a flip-flop with a flower on the big toe.

The trend also has impacted brands that assiduously avoid the mass market, such as San Clemente-based Rainbows, whose \$45-and-up, hand-assembled flip-flops have had a cult following among surfers since 1974.

Jay "Sparky" Longley, a 59-year-old surfer who for years limited his production of Rainbow Sandals "so I wouldn't have to leave the beach and move to L.A.," said he finally succumbed two years ago to entreaties for more orders from the mom-and-pop surf stores he sells to. He opened a second factory and doubled production, thinking that would be plenty for a beach sandal that relies mostly on word-of-mouth and is designed to last decades. He was mistaken.

"We sold \$5.5 million last year, we'll do \$10 million this year, and we could double that next year if we wanted," Longley said.



Flip-flops have many devoted fans

By SUSAN AGER

St Louis Today, 12 July 2003

DID YOU hear? Flip-flops are hot. "Thong sandals," fashion writers call them, insinuating sex. You can pay a hundred bucks for a pair. Divas and urban designers are wearing them, not just 8-year-olds and poor white trash.

I planned to do serious research on this trend before writing an ode to the original flip-flops, the cheap rubber shoes of summer.

Then I met David A. Seiler, whose rubber flip-flops are black and white, obviously thinning at the heels and toes.

He is a sculptor and painter, 25 years old. In half an hour he tells me why flip-flops are the world's perfect shoes.

"I wear them every single day," he says from the stone-lined basement studio where he's living this summer, as artist-in-residence for the gallery upstairs. "I wear them to cocktail parties. I ride my bike in them. I play basketball in them. I play golf in them. You can wear them with anything, pants or shorts and on really dressy occasions, as long as you make your top look nice and you have nice feet.

"But when I go to a party, I do throw 'em in the sink and wash 'em first."

He lifts his foot, slips a flip-flop into his hand and lifts it to my face like a newborn puppy. "What I really love about these is that they say Africa on the straps. See? My friend was going to South Africa and asked what I wanted, and I said, 'Flip-flops.' He said, 'I can get you plenty.' I told him, 'One is enough.'"

He's worn this pair every day since March. He lives in the San Francisco Bay area. He owns pairs from Australia and Mexico, too. "I'd love to get flip-flops" - size 10 1/2 or 11 - "from everyplace in the world, even though they're all made

in China."

But to Michigan, for his summer on the Leelanau Peninsula, he brought just the South African pair. Last week he wore them to a party in a wealthy gated community.

The host wore penny loafers. Seiler heard him tell his wife, "Dear, we've dated ourselves." Everyone else sipped fine wine in flip-flops.

I show Seiler my own, on sale from J. Crew, in Martha Stewart green. I slip one off.

"Oh, these are good!" he says, thwacking the strap with his fingers. "You know it's good rubber when it jiggles."

He's cheered by the clip-clop of his flip-flops. It reminds him of the playing card he attached to his bicycle spokes as a kid.

"Flip-flops are everything about comfort," he says. "Everyone I've admired in my life wears them." Like who? "The Dalai Lama. At least I heard he did. And my father. And all my best friends in college. Flip-flops mean a definitely laid-back person."

He takes one off again and shows me where it melted when he stood too close to a campfire. "That's another thing I love about these," he says. "You create a relationship and they change with you. They mold to your feet like tacos."

They ask so little - and give so much.



Flip-Flops---For The Office Or The Beach?

By Lydia Ramsey

Active Pro.com, 11 July 2003

They're back! Flip-flops. Maybe they never really went away. In any case, flip-flops are one of the hottest trends in summer fashion footwear. If you are wondering when the first shoe of this type appeared, I did a little research and discovered that sandals---which is what we are talking about here---came into existence around 2000 B.C. So for those of you who think this shoe is a brand new creation, think again.

This shoe began as a basic item to protect the soles of the feet. A simple strap between the toes made it easy to wear. In recent years this utilitarian footwear has been recognized as a beach shoe or a shower shoe. That's right, a shower shoe. In the 1950's, the flip-flops emerged in California as "go-aheads" named such because you couldn't walk backwards in them.

So how did we get from the shower shoe to the hottest footwear of the season? One of the morning television news shows recently did a feature story on flip-flops. Several of the reporters were actually touting this as the shoe to wear to work. Fortunately, one of the news anchors, a well-dressed man in a suit and tie, expressed his dismay at the thought of these thongs showing up at the office.

Flip-flops now come in every imaginable fabric and heel-height. Once an inexpensive plastic shoe with a flat sole, it now comes in a variety of manmade and natural materials, in low to high heels, any color and design you can imagine and prices ranging for \$5 to \$200.

Flip-flops have become versatile, but once again people are confusing the latest fashion with business attire. Flip-flops, and their sandal cousins, are not business professional footwear. The "go-ahead" will most likely not help you get ahead in your career.

It is not simply a matter of appearance-whether these shoes look professional or not---it is a matter of safety as well. Any shoe that has an open toe, heel or both can create peril in the workplace.

So before you slip into your cool new flip-flops for which you just paid a small fortune, think about where you work. Are these shoes appropriate? If you work in a fashion store where you are modeling the trendiest new styles, go for it. If you are waiting tables at the beachside restaurant, wear them. If the boss is wearing them, it's okay. Do your homework before you make your decision.

Consider the words of Corby O'Connor, business etiquette columnist for the New Jersey Star Ledger who writes, " As far as flip-flops are concerned, don't even consider wearing them to your job unless you are a lifeguard. Not only are they casual to the extreme and indicate you don't take your job too seriously; they pose a safety hazard to your feet."



Hot to trot

By Skye Earls

Odessa American Online, 27 July 2003

Toeing the line?

Flip-flop manners: Although casually baring your feet in flip-flops is more acceptable in many places, there are some places you might want to think twice before kicking your heels up in them:

- * Schools*
- * Churches*
- * Hospitals*
- * Wakes, funeral ceremonies*
- * Job interviews, office work*
- * Gyms, fitness centers*
- * Nice restaurants*
- * Banquets, receptions*
- * Proms, dances*

Phew, it's hot outside. Time to break out something a little cooler to wear. Maybe it's time to whip out those thongs, for the feet not the seat, of course. The Express in Music City Mall has flip-flops for sale alongside all their clothes in matching colors. Express is not known for selling shoes, yet the appearance of flip-flops in their store displays how the flip-flop trend has caught fire.

"Anyone from the young ones to the older ones wear them," Senior Department Manager Sharon Zarate at the J.C. Penney in the mall said.

Zarate explained that older people usually tend to wear the more conservative flip-flops, while the younger ones go with more trendy versions. She thinks that flip-flops have become more acceptable.

"Now they're much cuter than the old rubber thong," Zarate said. "The kids wear them to restaurants, everywhere nowadays. Probably to church, too."

Zarate had just finished saying she thought church might be one place where flip-flops aren't as acceptable, along with other formal places, like some office and retail jobs.

Over at Payless ShoeSource on Andrews Highway, Assistant Manager Irma Ramos was wearing flip flops in her store, but Ramos also felt that church might not be the best place to wear flip-flops.

"I wear flip-flops everywhere I go, but probably not to church," Ramos said. "You wear flip-flops there, and the father looks at you kind of weird. Although I've seen it, I've seen it."

Sonia Almanza, who is a sales associate at Journey's, was listing where she didn't think flip-flops were appropriate and started with job interviews as one place, and then said church. But at that, she added with a laugh, "Well, actually I have worn flip-flops to church."

The consensus of the fashion industry is that wearing flip-flops with dress-wear is not etiquette style, according to P S Images Modeling and Training in Midland, Owner Ellen Mitchell.

"They are more appropriate for street-wear and the beach," she said. "They are not really Sunday wear either."

Mitchell did however make an exception: in more casual atmospheres, sundresses or nice slacks with cute matching flip-flops might be okay.

Gail Etheredge-Woods, an interior designer at Etheredge & Company, shares that she thinks flip-flops can be worn anywhere you have the courage to wear them.

"The younger and cuter you are, the more you can get away with it," Etheredge-Woods said.

With the seasonal clothes of the spring and summer, flip-flops seem to complete the outfit with their many different varieties.

"It has to do with a lot of the clothes they have coming out now such as the capris, the long skirts and short skirts," Ramos said.

While it might not be appropriate to wear flip-flops with that new suit to work, the variety offered does make it easier to get away with them in more places.

"We have those platform flip-flops, and I guess you can wear those with skirts because they're dressier," Almanza said.

While flip-flops are becoming more acceptable as the trend grows, not everyone agrees where they should or should not be worn, or what with.

But Ramos thinks the casual look that is so popular helps this trend along and describes the shoes as "they are the easy get up and go."

The flip-flops appear to be particularly popular in Odessa to Almanza "because of the hot weather and people don't like to wear close-toed shoes."

JC Penny is doing well with them compared to other stores, and Zarate thinks it might be correlated to the more casual lifestyle in Odessa.

She easily explains the flip-flop's appeal: "They're cute, inexpensive, fun, fashionable."

Flip-flopping Head Over Heels

By Stefanie Polsinelli

On the Wall, 16 July 2003

If the weather gets any hotter, people will not be able to tell the difference between Hades and earth (I'm going to go the positive route and assume there is one). When it's this nasty outside, people like to wear as little clothing as possible- which can look quite unfortunate in some cases- and this includes the shoes that protect their feet.

The wonderful thing about the newest shoe trend is that it allows people to be stylish and as cool as the proverbial cucumber at the same time.

If you want to be at the pinnacle of the fashion pyramid, then simply slip on a pair of thongs-sandals, that is.

This summer, every designer has at least one pair of thongs (a.k.a. flip flops) in his or her collection. Because the brands run the gamut from *Walmart* to *Gucci*, you are sure to find a pair of shoes in your price range.

Some people are not fond of thongs because they wedge a piece of material (often leather or plastic) between the first two toes, causing painful friction and often resulting in nasty blisters. And the last thing someone wants- besides excruciating pain felt with every step- is a huge, bloody blister for all to see.

The new thongs, however, are built with comfort in mind. And if you go with a higher-priced product, you are even further guaranteed comfy hoofing. If you buy a pair of cheap plastic flip flops, you can't complain if they tear your skin to shreds. While spending \$60 on what in reality is a slab of leather with a string tied to it might seem absurd, your feet may thank you.

That said, even cheapies can be great. New materials being used in their design ensure that the flip flops keep your feet neat. For instance, *Havaianas*, available at stores like Aritzia, cost about \$18 but are crazy comfy. Made of rubber and printed with floral patterns, they are casual enough for the beach and fancy enough to take you to a restaurant on the boardwalk.

Flojos is another popular brand, thanks to the company's great patterns and low prices. The Hawaiian-inspired version (pineapples and all!) is the brand's best-seller. *Trixie*, a boutique at Jane and Bloor, carries a great selection of *Flojos*.

You can find a pair of flip flops to suit your every desire.

There are ultrasuede thongs from brands like *Mella* for those of you with tender tootsies and

ritzy tastes, as well as traditional rubbers from *Old Navy* (for \$4!) for all you sentimentalists.

And don't worry about matching your shoes to your outfit. Thongs come in every shade and pattern under the sun. You can even buy a pair with sequins at the *Gap* for those nights when you want to jazz up your breezy summer dress.

Big-name designers like *Gucci* and *Jimmy Choo* have hopped on the bandwagon and created high-priced designs for those people who are not content with plain, old rubber. The designs and prices vary, with some thongs costing hundreds of dollars (what with being encrusted with jewels and all).

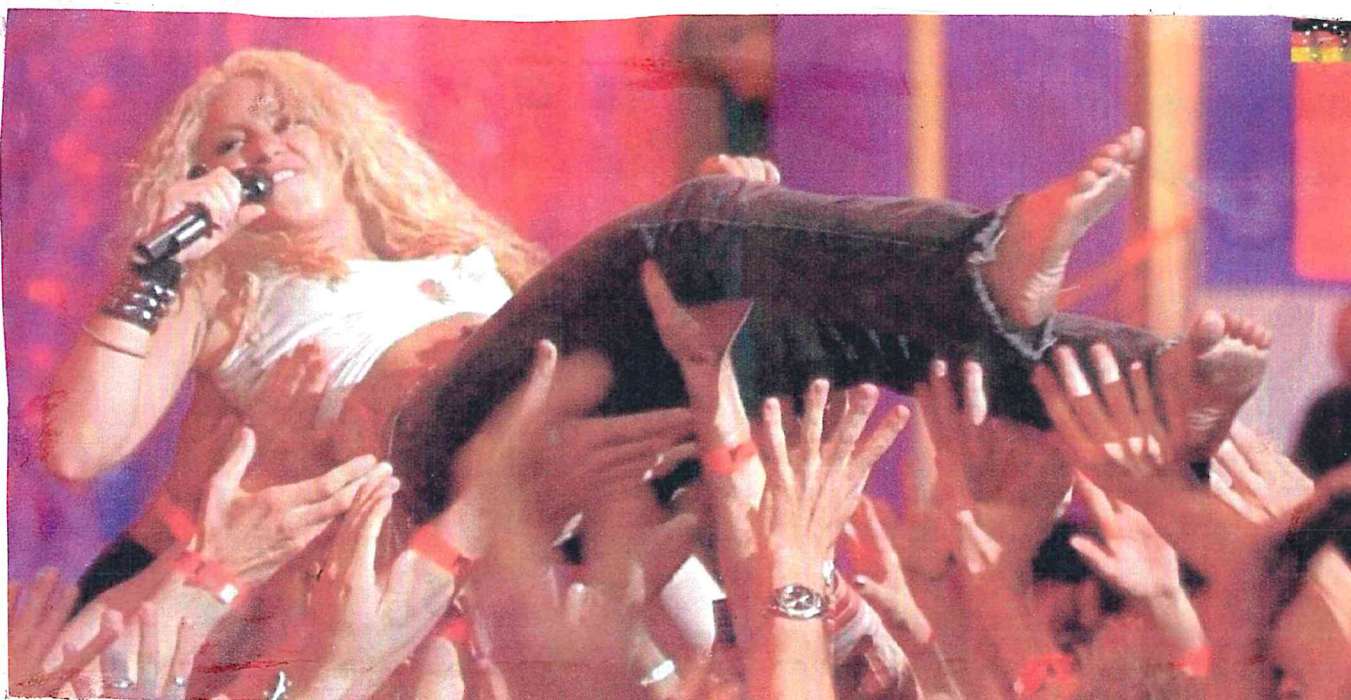
There are dressy versions of flip flops and sporty ones, too. Adidas, for instance, has a great retro-looking pair for about \$30. *Mossimo*, a super-cool designer who has miraculously started to sell a collection at *Zellers*, has a plastic-and-rubber pair of flip flops for less than six bucks!

Don't think you have to go to some boutique or *Walmart* superstore to find your dream shoes. Local stores like *Capezio* and *Town Shoes* carry a variety of thongs. From rubber to leather, these stores will have your feet (or at least your soles) covered.

One Web site, www.flipfloptrunkshow.com is solely devoted to thong-like shoes. The company even sells clothing to match the shoes. It's one of the cutest sites around, so check it out. Using the Web to do your shopping, you can buy everything you need to be trendy while basking in the comfort of A/C. Could it get any better?

Although this trend is one of the easiest to be in on, keep in mind that these shoes expose a lot of skin. Feet, at their best, are one of the ugliest parts of the body. Make sure your nails are cut and polished (or at least buffed) and that all dry skin, calluses, bunions, and other such forms of nastiness become (or hopefully, remain) figments of the imagination.

That said, happy thonging!



Why everyone's flipping for flip-flops

By Suzanne Wilson

Gazette Net, 9 July 2003

They're at the beach, of course, where they've always been. But they're also on city streets, at parties and at weddings. Guests are wearing them, and even a bride so inclined can find white flip-flops adorned with white satin flowers for that special day.

Photos of flip-flops in bright reds, floral patterns and that old standby, black, have shown up on The New York Times' SundayStyles pages, on too many shopping Web sites to mention, and in drugstores, chain outlets, department stores and trendy boutiques.

First there were zoris

So what exactly is a flip-flop? It's probably not a good idea to get too serious about this, but a search for an accurate definition did turn up a description online from an article in a 2001 issue of the Journal of Business and Design. Flip-flops, it said, exemplify "Zen simplicity run amok."

Today's flip-flops trace their origins to Asia where, the article said, zori sandals have been worn for more than a thousand years. Made out of woven straw and an attached V-shaped cotton thong, zoris over time migrated to Hawaii on the feet of sugar-cane workers.

After World War II, the rubber version of the sandals began earning broad appeal as shower and beach wear in the United States. Americans gave the sandals a name that described their distinctive sound as wearers happily flip-flopped their way through the 1950s.

Today, they've made the jump from beachwear to everyday wear.

But not everywhere. Flip-flops, it must be said, are still considered a fashion don't in some circumstances and are frowned upon in many offices.

The Gazette's most recent spring fashion section noted that lifeguards are the only people who should wear flip-flops to work. Last fall, Mayor Sara Hathaway of Pittsfield created a mini-flap when she said that city workers dressed in such items as Hawaiian shirts, shorts, sneakers and flip-flops did not make for "a professional environment." Though a proposed dress code drew criticism from some quarters and wasn't finalized, the mayor said most employees got the message and spruced up on their own.

Comfortable and cheap

But for some, there is simply nothing like a good flip-flop. As she browsed in several downtown Northampton stores last week, 23-year-old Rabia Bajwa of South Hadley spoke as though she would never again love a pair of shoes the way she loves her sturdy, black Teva-brand flip-flops.

"I've had them for three years, and I've worn them to a wedding, and I've worn them traveling and hiking," she said. "At home they're my house slippers." When they get dirty, Bajwa said, she simply rinses them out in the sink, lets them dry and slips them back on again.

At Faces in downtown Northampton, a display near the entrance features flip-flops with monkey faces and flip-flops with red cherries, along with simple flip-flops in green, turquoise and other colors. It's a retail category that's grown in recent years and is still growing, says buyer Lora Fischer.

The reasons aren't hard to understand, she said. Flip-flops are comfortable and cheap - most of those at Faces go for under \$15. They can be worn with just about anything, Fischer said, whether to dress down a dress, or dress up a pair of jeans or capris. Plus they're cool in summer, she said - and fun.

Carla Mastrangelo, who recently graduated from Northampton High School, estimates that maybe half of the girls at the high school's prom this year wore them with their gowns. Not just any old flip-flops, mind you, but the kind that are decorated with sparkly rhinestones or sequins, and can run up to \$40 or so.

Even during colder weather, flip-flops could be seen on some students, Mastrangelo said, usually worn with long pants that spilled over onto the foot. That's a "casual, grungy" look, she said.

It wasn't just students who were braving the elements in their flip-flops. Manhattan fashionistas, according to an article last May in the New York Observer, were so eager to be seen in their new purchases that they succumbed to what writer Bonnie Vaughan dubbed Premature Outdoor Flip-Flop Syndrome, or POFFS.

Crazy about flip-flops

Mastrangelo works at Synergy in Northampton, a store that carries flip-flops and other footwear. To say that she likes flip-flops doesn't really capture her enthusiasm.

"I'm crazy about flip-flops," she said the other day.

Asked how many she owns, Mastrangelo paused. "Oh my God," she said with a sigh. "Probably like a dozen."

She reserves her rubber flip-flops for the beach or just hanging out. She has a pair with a clear plastic thong that can be worn with just about everything. She considers her leather flip-flops dressier. "They're more like a pair of shoes," she said. "It's a different mentality."

Mastrangelo also has a pair of "really awesome" red platform flip-flops. At 4 feet 11 inches tall, she said, she likes the extra height they give her. In fact, many, many people have snapped up the platform-style flip-flops, which created quite a stir when they first appeared on the scene several years back.

"I totally remember them being wicked, wicked popular," she said.

That look - "a flip-flop with some chunk to it" as Mastrangelo calls it - is still popular, says Synergy co-manager Rachel Holland.

But there are new contenders, such as flip-flops with faces or quotations on them. "People think they're really witty and funny," Mastrangelo said.

There are, she has found, some people who don't wear flip-flops because they can't stand the idea of having anything between their toes. Luckily, she's not one of them. "They don't bother me," she said.

She has discovered that flip-flops do make her more conscious of how her feet look - and their popularity probably hasn't hurt the nail polish and pedicure business.

"Oh absolutely," she said. "You have to have good toes to wear flip-flops."

Come September, Mastrangelo will be packing up her flip-flops and other belongings and heading off to Simmons College in Boston. She might be bringing along one new pair she's had her eye on - one that has a teeteringly high platform. She's holding back, though, because of a couple of reservations. The height might be "too much chunk for my foot," she said, and she's wondering if that ultra-high look might be losing its trendiness.

Might that suggest, she was asked, that flip-flops in general could be on the way out?

Not at all, came the reply.

"You'll always need flip-flops," she said, "no matter what."



Sole Searching: The history of flip-flops

By John Tanasychuk
Staff Writer

Sun Sentinel, July 8 2003

My sisters and I wore flip-flops all summer long throughout the late '60s and early '70s when they were surely less than 50 cents a pair.

We wore them to run through the sprinkler. We wore them when we piled in the car for a trip to the ice cream parlor. We wore them to the public swimming pool where dad would drop us off early on summer mornings and pick us up in late afternoon. We wore them when school ended and didn't take them off until September.

The summer of 2003 -- and the explosion of flip-flops in store after store -- made me so nostalgic for childhood that I packed away my Birkenstocks and went hunting for the perfect pair.

My search begins with a history-seeking phone call to Elizabeth Semmelhack, curator at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto, a repository of some 12,000 artifacts including shoes, socks, laces, even images of shoes.

"I will tell you straight out that I cannot tell you the origins of flip-flops," says Semmelhack. "I've already been down this road with National Geographic."

Best she can tell, flip-flops first appeared in the United States after World War II when returning soldiers stuffed souvenir flip-flops in their duffel bags. Geishas wear a version, but during the war, Japanese soldiers fashioned flip-flops from old car tires.

"The real early flip-flops were probably worn by the pharaohs," says Semmelhack, whose collection includes some 5,000-year-old sandals that might qualify. "But I don't know who copyrighted the flip-flop in hieroglyphics."

How does a curator of footwear define a flip-flop? Very simply. "By the sound they make."

Flip-flops have evolved from their humble rubber beginnings. "Part of their popularity is that they're not only inexpensive to make, but there's a modernist simplicity to them. They're the embodiment of form following function."

Semmelhack recently coveted a Louis Vuitton pair but got over it when she discovered the company doesn't make them to fit her size 11 dogs.

So what does she think of designer flip-flops, anyway? High-heeled? Leather? Jeweled? Do they qualify as the real thing?

"Fashion has always been about making some sort of wry statement, and I think that's what's going on," she says. "But once you start changing all the basics, I'm not sure. At what point does it stop being a flip-flop? Essentially when it stops being beachwear. You don't wear high heels to a sandy beach for a lot of practical reasons."

Because I'm somewhat particular about the shoes I put on my feet, I head to Bal Harbour Shops, the fashionable collection of stores that is Miami-Dade's answer to Palm Beach's Worth Avenue.

I start at Neiman Marcus, where I see that Gucci has a pair worth considering: Leather sole. Red and green Gucci ribbon. But with a price tag of \$285, that's several hundred summers of my 50-cent childhood footwear. There's another pair that incorporates Gucci's newly classic "G." Only \$295 and perfect, if I were George or Greg or Gary.

This is a dangerous mall to be in if you're in the mood to spend money. I bypass Ferragamo but am momentarily distracted by a black pointy-toed loafer in another store window.

I resist and head to Sak's Fifth Avenue, where varying styles beckon. There's a leather Tommy Bahama (\$75) and a Cole-Hahn (\$115) with a clear plastic sole that looks as though it might light up when I walk.

A few doors down at Tod's, the home of the driving moccasin, there are flip-flops in Tod's distinctively colorful palette. They are of exceptional quality, as they ought to be for \$345.

I leave Bal Harbour empty-handed, but not before noticing that women have

endless flip-flop choices. Miu Miu, Burberry, Jimmy Choo, the list of designers goes on and on.

I thought I had choices.

Brie Heath, spokeswoman for Target stores, says flip-flops have become a staple of every woman's summer wardrobe.

"They're a very good inexpensive way to add color and comfort to any outfit," she says. "We grew up with them and you tend to stick with what you know works for you."

Heath is delighted with all of the options this year. This summer, she's been wearing flip-flops to work and then changing into something more suitable for her Minnesota office.

At SuperTarget in Lauderhill, I find 120 feet of display space devoted to flip-flops, for men, women and children. Imitation cork. Suede. Rhinestones. Beads. Terry cloth. I'm overwhelmed.

At Macy's in the Fashion Mall in Plantation the choices are surprisingly slim. I see one pair by Kenneth Cole, reduced to \$49.99 from \$70. They're black and white, too flashy for my tastes.

At this point in my search, I realize I need to scale back. The flip-flop of my youth was not about fashion but function.

I want flip-flops I can wear to the beach and to take out the garbage. I want something that is perhaps too simple for this season of over-the-top flip-flops.

Back in the car, on my way home, I pass Wal-Mart. It's worth a try.

And there they are.

My flip-flops are the brightest of blue and cost \$1.94. At last, it feels like summer.

America Becoming A Flip-Flop Nation

By Amy M. Cotham

The Morning News, 5 August 2003

One generation's shower shoes have become another's fashion statement, apparently.

The popularity of flip-flops cannot be denied. Most major designers offer flip-flops as part of their summer collections, and the shoes come in all shapes, colors and materials.

Now that designers are behind the trend, of course, flip-flops also come in all price ranges. Yet it seems the cheap version, formerly reserved for the beach, pool or dormitory shower stall, is just as popular as more those that are designer blessed. These pseudo-shoes are being worn with more than just bathing and birthday suits, but why flip-flops seem appropriate with dresses and pants is beyond me. It's nice to be past a time when open-toed shoes with anything were a sign of a "loose woman," but things seem to be getting off on the wrong foot.

Friends who enjoy the darn things are certainly enthusiastic about this beloved footwear, however. Maybe the appeal is the feeling of being of being barefoot when they're really not. Maybe it's the comforting, rhythmic sound the shoes make when flipping and flopping while walking. Maybe after saddle shoes and jellies, chunky heels and then spiked heels, women need a new trend, and one that's comfortable.

But I would like to argue that flip-flops aren't really that comfortable or fun to walk in. And have you ever tried to RUN in the darn things? I am not sure if they use flip-flops in jail, but it would seem a good way to slow down any would-be escapees. Anyone who can pick up any speed in the sandals likely won't make it far before they trip.

The shoes have become a sort of unisex trend, too, with men and boys showing off feet that have spent years inside athletic socks and work boots. Is this a good thing? Should men display tootsies that are usually less-well manicured than that of the ladies? Probably not, but flip-flops allow just that. Now, some men are as obsessive about their feet as women, and some are even hip enough to wear toe nail polish. But those guys are few and far between, and the guys with scary feet seem to think if the flip-flop fits, they are for sure going to wear it.

One male colleague admits his athletic shoes are more comfortable, but defends his decision to wear flip-flops anyway by because of their easy-on, easy-off conveyance. Why he's in such a hurry I'm not sure. But he's one of our Internet computer geeks, and who understands those

guys?

Denise Malan, our former Morning News intern and now the editor of the Arkansas Traveler, jumped on the flip-flop bandwagon before it was trendy. She's one of those people you see sporting them in the dead of winter, which she defends by saying, "They're just so easy to wear. You don't have to mess with socks or laces. Call me lazy, but it's true."

Malan also thinks flip-flops on guys are not only acceptable, they're cool. "I like flip-flops on guys, as long as they're masculine-looking -- brown or black, plain and simple," she says. "I think it shows the guy is low maintenance and likes to be comfortable."

Of her own shoe collection, Malan says, "I have eight to 10 pairs of flip-flops, all different colors. They are so cheap, you can afford to own several pairs and get all different colors. I do have a major shoe-buying problem, so affordability is a huge plus." Spoken like a college student!

"I also like them because they are easy to walk in, they don't blister your feet like some other sandals, and they're so easy to take care of," Malan went on. "If you get them dirty, just rinse them off with a hose. No problem."

Well, there you have it, some very good reasons why flip-flops are so popular. It seems it will be awhile until the trend runs its course, so here are a few tips for those people who love the shoes.

1. Be careful when picking up speed.
2. Avoid wearing flip-flops with socks or panty hose. (Yes, I have seen people do this.)
3. Switch to warmer footwear when the cold Ozark mountain weather kicks in.
4. And if you have the kind of feet that would make a podiatrist cry, please walk, don't run, to the shoe store for an alternative.



Flip-flops create school fashion flap

Officials meet to clarify dress- code infraction

By Jenny Lacoste

Pensacola News, 13 Aug. 2003

There seems to be a generation gap in the flip-flop flap.

Believe it or not, students and principals in Escambia County's middle and high schools don't see eye-to-eye on what constitutes a flip-flop. The flimsy footwear is banned under the School District's new dress code.

Schools started cracking down on dress-code violators last week during the first day of school. But some students were puzzled when they learned their favorite shoes don't pass inspection.

"I love flip-flops. They're so comfortable ", said Escambia High junior Kristee Wheeler. "I wore them the first day of school, but I got in trouble."

At a principals' meeting Tuesday, top school executives debated the topic: What is a flip-flop?

Alan Scott, Escambia's director of secondary education, drew his idea of a flip-flop on a white board - a thin, rubber shoe with a strap between the big toe and the second toe.

He was so sure that's what a flip-flop looks like, he told his daughter, Whitney, that her sandals - with straps like a flip-flop but a more substantial sole - were fine for school.

But Whitney's principal, Carolyn Spooner, disagreed.

"It was a flip-flop," said the Tate High principal. "Those aren't OK at my school."

Ultimately, it's up to the principal to decide. At Woodham and Washington high schools, anything above a shower shoe is fine. At Escambia and Tate, there needs to be a strap other than the one between the toes as well as a substantial heel or sole on the shoe.

"We have stairs here, and we have to be concerned about safety," said Escambia High Principal Carl Leiterman, who said the strap of a flip-flop can be torn too easily. "With 1,700 kids, it gets crowded in these hallways and stairwells. It's easy to have a foot stepped on."

The rule comes at a time when various versions of flip-flops are in fashion. They've evolved

from simple shower shoes, and they come in different fabrics, patterns and colors - with straps decorated by flowers, rhinestones or sequins.

Some have a thick, chunky sole that gives the casual shoe a more dressed-up appearance.

Spooner said she does not see the height of a heel making much of a difference.

"I just could not justify that to parents when they're nearly identical," she said.

Amanda Tatro said almost all of her shoes are flip-flops, but she'll wear out her tennis shoes in the halls of Escambia High.

"I think every pair of shoes I own except the ones I'm wearing right now are flip-flops," said Amanda, 17. "I don't mind the rule. I can't wear them to work either, and school is kind of like a work environment. I'm here to learn, not to be fashionable."

But classmate Marissa Massey had to shop for trendy shoes that fit the rules.

"I have flip-flops in every color just sitting in my closet," she sighed. "But I understand why we can't wear them. I'm surprised I haven't fallen down the stairs before."

Escambia School Board member John DeWitt, who pushed for the stricter dress code, said he doesn't see where the debate is coming from.

"If it flips and it flops, it's a flip-flop," he said. "What's so hard about that?"

Flip-flop or sandal?

If they look like shower shoes, or you paid less than \$2 for them, they're probably not allowed at Escambia County schools.

But if you're not sure whether your cool new shoes fit the new dress code, principals suggest bringing them in and asking because rules vary from school to school.



Flip-flop day gives summer the boot

By Suzanne Brown

Denver Post, 21 Aug. 2003

Flip-flops are standard summer attire at the office of the Sullivan Group in downtown Denver, but tomorrow they will be mandatory.

That's because it's the second annual Flip-Flop Friday, and founder Chuck Sullivan wants to bring a little levity to summer's end.

Sullivan has recruited local artists, designers and celebrities to decorate and design flip-flops that will be shown and sold to support the Art Students League. The free show is 4-8 p.m. Friday in the Mercantile Room of the Wynkoop Brewing Co, 1634 Wynkoop (at 18th Street).

"It's fun, it's Friday, so stay downtown and see some fun artwork," Sullivan says.

On display will be flip-flops in such materials as ceramic and mixed media, and among the celebrity entries are a pair autographed by Todd Helton and Larry Walker of the Colorado Rockies.

The Museum of Contemporary Art's entry, a working telephone, is titled "Talk to You on the Flip Side," while the Colorado History Museum detailed changes in archaeology in "Flipping through Time." (Both museums, by the way, are offering two-for-one admission Friday to those wearing flip-flops.)

McClain Finlon Advertising had three of its employees create a bug-inspired triptych, "The Three Bugditos" out of flip-flops and craft supplies. Bonnie Reiss turned her flips into a butterfly; Courtney Harris constructed a lady bug; and Andy Campbell made a caterpillar. All were mounted in shadow boxes and will be sold as a set.

"It was so great because as an adult you rarely get to play with crafts," Reiss said.

Flip-flops, by the way, are often worn by employees at McClain Finlon, but the staff will be encouraged to wear them on Friday. Persuade your boss to do the same.



Flip-flops are tops

By Tara Norris and Meagan Logsdon

The Anniston Star, 16 Aug. 2003

As summer comes to a close, you realize school has sneaked up on you. You, however, don't have to give in. With stricter dress codes, shorts and skirts are almost completely banned. No more spaghetti straps or tank tops, but most schools still allow flip-flops.

It seems as though every year ushers in a new fad. Remember the Timberland boots and the Birkenstock crazes over the last few years? This year, it seems as though people have opted for a cheaper fad, flip-flops. They are taking over high school hallways everywhere.

Do we mean sandals? No. Sandals are for moms, dads, and people with foot problems.

Flip-flops are the fun and funky footwear that are loud when you walk and can be loud to the eye. Many of the more popular colors are pink, beige, baby blue, and white for the girls and brown, black, navy, and gray for the guys. Yes, we said guys. The fad has branched to the male species. Color alone is not enough to do justice to the amount of funky patterns and crazy styles now found for both guys' and girls' flip-flops.

This year flip-flops can be featured on the feet of parents, teachers, youth ministers, teens, and college students. The fad has grown so much that older generations have even ventured purchasing a pair.

Flip-flops can be picked up at any of the local department stores or shoe stores. Prices can vary from as little as \$1.50 to \$12. Some stores offer more expensive versions of the fun shoe. However, price is not a factor in the comfort and cuteness of flip-flops.

Be sure to get yourself some of these fun shoes before stores everywhere stock up with toe-covering winter shoes. Remember, treat your feet to a fun pair of flip-flops before it's too late!



Flip-flop fashion goes year-round

By TUX TURKEL

Portland Press Herald, 12 Sept. 2003

SANFORD — September's cool mornings suggest it's time to put away the summer footwear. But inside an old mill building here, Travis Holland and David Hoidal have 10,000 square feet of space stacked with boxes of flip-flops. For them, the season for thong sandals is just heating up. Holland and Hoidal own Toegoz Inc., which rhymes with logos. And it's the logo - everything from a whale or a lobster to college team mascots and corporate symbols - that has turned the familiar beach sandal into a money maker for the small business.

In three years, Toegoz has gone from a concept to a profitable enterprise that's on target to gross roughly \$2.4 million in sales in 2003 and send more than 250,000 flip-flops flying around the country. The men say they expect growth to continue.

The reasons behind their success may not be obvious to people who keep their toes confined in shoes and socks most of the year. But it turns out that the flip-flop, born as cheap footwear on the beaches of Brazil in the 1960s, is now high fashion. Designer flip-flops have made the scene this summer, and a high-heel version was reportedly selling for \$85 in Beverly Hills.

That's not the Toegoz market, but Holland and Hoidal are capitalizing on a complementary trend. Flip-flops are being worn year-round, especially in warmer climates, and they are walking away from the water's edge. As they become mainstream footwear, it's only logical that flip-flops be emblazoned with the various logos that Americans seem to demand as a form of self-expression on their clothing.

Call it flop culture.

"It's recognition," Holland said. "It's like wearing a sweatshirt. It's part of the school uniform."

Schools are a big market for Toegoz. The company now sells to 140 colleges and 24 sororities. And because there are millions of school students and an incoming class of freshmen every year wanting logo wear, Holland and Hoidal believe they have just scratched the surface.

Holland and Hoidal first met as bartenders in Maine in the early 1990s, but went their separate ways. Hoidal, who is 34, worked as a stockbroker in New York City and spent time in California, where he noticed the popularity of flip-flops.

Back in Maine in 1999, he ran into Holland and the two men began discussing the flip-flop trend. They hit on the concept of embroidering logos on the strap and thought it might present a business opportunity.

After developing some prototypes, they drove to colleges and prep schools around New England. The reaction was cool. School stores doubted the demand, and questioned the pair's ability to stock many sizes. But the men persisted and slowly built a customer base. One key to becoming profitable, they said, was not skimming excess money from revenue until the business began to turn a profit.

"We basically paid ourselves nothing for a couple of years," Hoidal said.

Like most small businesses, Toegoz was launched with owner financing. Family and friends later invested in the venture. The company got a big break in 2001, when it was able to secure a line of credit with Norway Savings Bank. That allowed Toegoz to expand its inventory and go after more customers.

"We never had to worry about making a sale and not providing a product," Holland said.

Toegoz orders its sandals from a Chinese manufacturer that makes the high-density soles to specification and embroiders the logos. The flip-flops are then shipped to Sanford for distribution.

In the mill building, rows of boxes are categorized by school and design.

"This is our Texas alley," Holland said. "Texas is a huge state for us."

Toegoz ships to 20 Texas schools, including Rice University and the University of Houston. Holland unwraps a University of Texas box to show the longhorn steer logo of the college's sports teams. Another box, for Texas Tech, contains flip-flops embroidered with a red Double-T pattern.

Across the aisle are flip-flops sold in stores across South Carolina. They feature a palmetto tree and crescent moon, symbols on the state's flag. Toegoz also sells several other "house designs," including alligators, fish and dolphins. These come in a variety of colors and are requested by retailers and resort operators from New England to the Bahamas. Holland displayed one with the design that looks like a martini glass, called Cosmopolitan.

"These were just flying off the shelves this year," he said.

Toegoz flip-flops are popular in Massachusetts on Martha's Vineyard, where hundreds are sold each year at Brickman's department store. They retail for \$19.95. One top seller features a logo with a ribbon and map of the upscale resort island. Debbie Levett, the store's owner, said many of her customers are from New York and Washington, D.C., and the map logo is a fashion statement.

"It says to people, 'I summer on the Vineyard,'" Levett said.

Toegoz is in the midst of a big sales season now, as the school year gets under way.

Rick Sotomayor is merchandise manager for Barnes & Noble college bookstores, which manages stores at 500 colleges and universities. The division is selling Toegoz at 200 stores, Sotomayor said, and it has become the best-selling clothing accessory, better than hats. The flip-flops generated \$300,000 in retail sales last year.

"The flip-flop has become the footwear of choice for college and high school students," Sotomayor said.

Sales do slow after Christmas, and Toegoz is introducing a second logo product - belts. They will be sold in the same markets and retail from \$20 to \$25.

Holland and Hoidal also are exploring the possibility of logo flip-flops for major league sport teams and auto racing. But they may be put off by the licensing fees. As it is, Toegoz must pay fees up to \$1,000 to use licensed college and corporate logos, as well as royalty fees on each product sold.

Autumn may be approaching in Maine, but both men were shod this week in flip-flops. They wear them through October, they said.

"People thought this was just a three- or four-month product," Holland said.

Fabulous flip-flops :

The humble rubber shoe seen nearly everywhere signals summertime

By Shawn Hubler

Los Angeles Times, 14 September 2003

Before Sarah Michelle Gellar wore white Moccasins in her wedding; before pairs of Havaianas turned up, bejeweled, in goodie bags for this year's Oscar nominees -- in short, before this became the Year of the Upmarket Flip-Flop -- there were certain things that were only about the beach.

One was the soft, thwick-thwack of thong sandals slapping bare feet. Another was the cheap smell of new rubber footgear in baskets and dime store bins. "Go-aheads," Southern Californians called them in the 1950s, because they'd fall off your feet if you tried to walk backward -- they were that poorly constructed.

Blisters formed where they split toes and rubbed tender insteps. Rare was the pair that went three weeks without breaking. Their sole promise -- temporary, like so many things about summer -- was that they'd keep the hot sand away from your skin.

Subliminally, though, they conveyed other signals that -- again, like so many things about summer -- have, over time, become commodified. They meant you were free, so free, in fact, that leisure could strike at any moment, so you'd better dress for it. That's what Californians of a certain age will tell you, because even there, fashion was not always open and easy. There was a time, even in sunny L.A., when people kept their toes to themselves when they weren't on vacation. Toes were personal. Toes were too much information. Toes had cleavage.

"At the beginning of the 20th century, women could not show their feet at all," said Mary Trasko, author of "Heavenly Soles," a history of footwear. "Feet were considered a very private part of the body." From the Middle Ages, in fact, a

glimpse of a woman's foot in most places was tantamount to trespassing on another man's property.

Kevin Jones, curator of the museum at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles, says that toes made a brief reappearance after the French Revolution, but shoes were closed again by 1810. They stayed that way into the 20th century.

"Even in the '20s and '30s," Trasko said, "the clothes were very modest. It wasn't until things opened up and women's roles changed that they could show their feet in polite society."

But when the Italian-born shoemaker Salvatore Ferragamo arrived in Hollywood to make sandals for biblical epics -- and inevitably for film stars -- America was ready, said Jones. Open-toed shoes became popular, as did open-heeled mules and flat slippers; World War II veterans brought back Japanese zoris and shoe manufacturers joined in postwar experimentation in industrial plastics. From these sweeping forces came the lowly flip-flop.

"I grew up in Laguna Beach in the 1950s, and I remember guys back from Japan wearing them after the Korean War," recalls surf promoter and historian Allan Seymour, who is now 60. "Up until then, people just wore these clunky leather sandals that we called 'Jesus Boots' in the '60s." Whatever the source, he says, they quickly were absorbed into the informal landscape of surf culture -- flimsy and loose in the '50s, the color of Popsicles in the '60s, then in every imaginable permutation from bamboo to platforms. They crammed trinket shops in beach towns and littered landfills in autumn. They became, for most of America, what you put on when the season coaxed you out of your inhibitions.

"They were the closest you could come," Seymour explains, "to bare feet."

And that's exactly why sister Natalie and Aleah Meggs like their flip flops. Sitting outside a Broadway storefront, the girls rested their bare feet against their flip flops.

"I like them because you're feet aren't stuck in shoes," Natalie said.

"And they aren't covered with socks and sweaty," Aleah added. She usually wears her flip-flops every day during the summer.

But flip-flops still were just summer shoes for most of the country until the 1990s

changed workplace fashion, some believe permanently. The dot-com revolution made overnight millionaires of 20-year-olds steeped in West Coast youth culture who wanted to know why they shouldn't wear what they chose to the office.

Corporations loosened dress codes and declared Casual Fridays. Fashion, as ever, followed the money: Now there was status in dressing as if work was just something to pop in on between yoga classes. Now dressing for success meant dressing as if leisure could strike at any moment. Summer was not just summer; summer was subtext.

"Suddenly," said Trasko, "every day was Casual Friday. And of course, never say never in fashion, but there has really been no going back."

For trend-followers, change has meant a sudden run on the beach's once-least-remarkable footwear. Havaianas -- \$3 Brazilian flip-flops of synthetic rubber that, for more than three decades, were the footwear of Sao Paulo peasants -- took off after supermodels such as Kate Moss sang their praises last year. In bright colors for \$10-\$15 a pair or studded with Swarovski crystals for \$150, they've shown up during the past year at the Cannes Film Festival and on the catwalk of designer Jean-Paul Gaultier. Exports -- which were at zero three years ago -- soared to 20 million pairs last year.

Fashion industry analysts say the flip-flop is the largest selling shoe in the developing world now. "Flip-flops are holding up the casual end of the market," says Marshal Cohen, chief industry analyst at the NPD Group in New York. "The casual sandal market is a \$1.8 billion business, up 22 percent overall this year, and it's almost entirely flip-flops."

"For California," Cohen said, "it's more of the same lifestyle, but the casualization of America has changed everything for the rest of the country."



Give your feet a break :

Flip-flops are the footwear of choice regardless of the season

By Lauren Hill

Florida Flambeau, 25 Sept. 2003

Flip-flop sandals have become a staple in most college students' wardrobes. Its popularity is mostly likely due to the extreme versatility that flip-flops offer their wearer. Flip-flops are welcomed in classrooms, practical in the shower and accepted in bars.

"I love wearing my Rainbow sandals," senior Rachel Mostel said. "They are extremely comfortable and match almost all of my clothes."

Students in Tallahassee are lucky to be able to wear sandals almost year-round due to the temperate Florida climate. While students up north are forced to wear uncomfortable boots and closed-toed shoes, students here can continue to flip and flop their way around campus.

"My favorite thing about flip-flop sandals is that they give my feet a rest after a long night in uncomfortable heels," junior Dee Anna Drennan said. "I don't think I could make the walk to class the next day without them."

Sandals aren't strictly limited to casual occasions however. Certain male students can even be found wearing their flip-flops along with a shirt and tie.

"I don't mind that guys wear sandals all the time even with their nice clothes," senior Karen Fenton said. "But I would advise purchasing new ones more than just once during their college career."

This type of behavior would seem inappropriate in many instances but at Florida State it has grown to be rather acceptable. Winter apparel accompanied by flip-flop sandals is another strange yet accepted custom among students.

However, not everyone has come to accept the Florida State custom of yearlong,

all outfit encompassing sandal wearing.

"I still can't understand why everyone loves Reef and Rainbow sandals," junior Stephanie Brogan said. "I have been an FSU student for two years now and I still refuse to become a flip-flop wearer."

Many students are not avid flip-flop enthusiasts upon their arrival on campus but many find themselves quick converts.

"I always joke around with my friends that you can tell who the new freshman are because they are not wearing flip-flops," Mostel said. "By sophomore year most people own at least one pair."

Once students are ready to purchase their first (or even tenth) pair of sandals there are a variety of different brands available. Popular brands include Rainbow, Reef, Gap and Old Navy. Flip-flops can be found with thick straps or thin straps and can be made out of leather, plastic and foam. Costs range anywhere from \$5 for shower sandals to \$50 for all-leather styles.

Flip-flops have become a dominating force on campus and their legacy is likely to continue to provide students with a comfortable walk to class for years to come.



Berkeley students have style — you just have to look closely

By Bonnie Azab Powell

UCBerkeley News, 4 September 2003

BERKELEY - To the rest of the world, "UC Berkeley student" might still conjure up images of bell-bottoms and peace signs. But the times, they have a'changed. These days you're much more likely to see camouflage tank tops than tie-dyed around Sproul Plaza, and while flared jeans are back in fashion, flip-flops outnumber Birkenstocks by five to one.

If fashion is what everybody else is wearing, then style describes the ways we make fashion our own. So do Cal students have style? Women's Wear Daily, the fashion retailers' newspaper, thinks so: in May it named Berkeley to its list of the top ten universities with fashionable students. (Cal came in at No. 10, just behind Yale; NYU was in first place, and Stanford didn't even make the catwalk.) Berkeley students, however, say there isn't so much a "Cal style" as an unstated style philosophy — and the main rule is "Comfort first."

Bridging the Gap

"If you see someone dressed up, they're usually faculty or staff. Even graduate students are pretty casual," says theater professor Clare Henkel, who teaches a popular two-semester costume design class. "Berkeley is so diverse ethnically — it's just fantastic — but people dress fairly similarly. There's lots of denim, lots of Gap, a fair amount of Cal merchandise."

Bryan Hicks, a first-year student who intends to major in film studies, admits he has been a little disappointed by the Gap parade. "Some people here have style, but for the most part it's mainstream conservative all the way," he says. Hicks is wearing a headband made from a T-shirt he received during summer orientation, and a military-style short-sleeved shirt and pants from a thrift store. "Before I came here I thought lots of people would dress different, but everyone is a lot more conservative than people think when they think of Berkeley."

For women, the omnipresent look is the boyish white tank popularized by Tony

Soprano and affectionately known as a "wifebeater," paired with low-rise jeans and flip-flops — or topping a denim mini and thong sandals with platform heels. However, "girls don't dress up here as much as guys tend to do. Some girls even come to class in their pajamas," alleges Lance Polverini, a senior majoring in political science.

Flip-flopping around

Although to the untrained eye Polverini's plaid shirt, shorts, and flip-flops look like standard-issue preppie, he describes his style as "a happy blend of Eurochic and contemporary West Coast fashion." (Watch the "Elements of Cal Style" an interactive Flash fashion show to see this and other looks.) Asked to identify the Eurochic part, he explains that he bought his leather flip-flops in Barcelona, and that the metal studded wristband he's sporting is key: "Accessories are the most important part of fashion; they exhibit your culture and how relaxed you can be. People say, 'How can he get away with that — a Ralph Lauren plaid shirt and a studded bracelet?' But I do."

The second rule of Cal style, then, is "Mix and match." Chris Ahlman, for example, a senior majoring in history who was born and raised in Berkeley, is wearing a new (but faded) pair of Gap jeans with a T-shirt from one of his favorite bands, Pearl Jam. But to this generic outfit he's added a floppy straw hat, a belt he made himself, and a bracelet his girlfriend gave him signifying their relationship. "I just try and stay comfortable and not worry what other people think," says Ahlman, who volunteers that his hat is actually one designed for women. "To me, style is not about making a statement, but about giving off confidence and my sense of what looks good."



Firm foothold

By Joanna Hogan

News-Press.com, 12 October 2003

They don't tell you this in the tourist literature, but the official shoe of Southwest Florida is the lowly flip-flop. Did we say lowly? Some of them cost more than \$100 a pair.

Closing in on a closet job to accommodate Margaret Bell's 50 pairs of flip-flops, carpenter Chris Muth still doesn't get it.

Why flip-flops?

"I'm from Chicago. I grew up where there's glass on the ground so I don't take my shoes off until I go to bed at night.

"I never wear flip-flops unless it's to get off the boat to go fishing," says Muth, just three shelves away from achieving Bell's south Fort Myers flip-flop nirvana.

Comfortable, inexpensive and disposable, flip-flops may be Southwest Florida's signature sandal. They make perfect sense in a lifestyle where gridlock is only tolerated when it has a beach at the end.

"I have no close-toed shoes," says Bell, 52, a retired registered nurse who works out daily and plans vacations around flip-flop outlet shopping.

Although defined by the sloppy sound they make, flip-flops have morphed from discount store staples to high-fashion footwear.

In the mainstream press this summer, flip-flops were associated with phrases such as "avalanche," "the rage," "couture," "obsession" and "impulse control."

That doesn't mean we don't still love those rubbery, slappy cheapos, but it does seem that a disproportionate share of the 200 million sandals sold this year in the U.S. ended up in Southwest Florida, locals say.

We wear Yellow Box (\$35-\$55), Sigerson Morrison (\$85), Eliza B (\$39.95), Naot (\$80-\$120), Teva (\$45-\$90), Rainbow (\$42.99-\$48.99), Quicksilver's Roxy (\$18.99) Reef (\$22.99-\$45) and Ecco, Matisse, Toegoos and A. Marinelli.

Southwest Florida is helping keep Yellow Box in business during the winter months, says owner Terry Chen.

"When it comes to winter, those Northeast places die, except for one customer in Chicago who buys all year and that's very unusual," Chen says.

Margaret Bell is doing her part for Chen's bottom line. From platforms to high heels, Bell owns all sorts. They are sequined, painted, rhinestone studded, dotted with crystals. The winter ones are suede. One pair recently was the envy of every stiletto-wearing woman at Palm Beach Breakers when Bell danced the night away in strappy silver ones.

"There's no cure once you're hooked," says Bell, who buys them for her daughter, Angela Brant, granddaughter, Madison and every houseguest.

"I have my sister hooked on them and she lives in Denver," Bell says.

Bell gets most of her flip-flops from Heather Holland's south Fort Myers shop, Mallie Montgomery, which sells 3,000 pairs a year.

"We call 150-200 people every time a new one comes in. It can take a full day," Holland says.

They used to call Bell every time they got a shipment, but they don't anymore — she now makes regular rounds.

"I want to get the size 9 before anybody else does. I've never gone in there that I haven't bought a pair," Bell says.

Brian and Anne Baugher sell more than 5,000 Yellow Box flip-flops each year in their Sanibel and Captiva stores, Footloose Outfitters, H2O and On and Offshore. Business is so good, they're building a sixth store that will open next spring.

Brian, 33, wears Rainbows or Tevas; Anne, 30, wears Yellow Box. Between them and their young two daughters, there are more than 100 flip-flops in the Baugher household.

"It's the convenience. You can wear them all year 'round and they're so cute now. They're colorful, comfortable, made out of tons of fabrics.

"Our biggest seller? Naot and Teva," says Anne Baugher, who is among Florida's top three independent Teva retailers.

It's a myth that women like flip-flops more than men, says Fort Myers Beach's West Coast Surf Shop manager Tammy Foster, 33. She never sees men in close-toed shoes "unless they are skating," she says.

"Flip-flops are 100 percent the official shoe," she says.

Ask the experts

Q: ARE FLIP-FLOPS NATIVE TO SOUTHWEST FLORIDA?

A: No. They're international (and ancient).

"Flip-flops have been found in the tombs of Egyptian pharaohs and in native American archaeological sites, worn by Japanese samurai and rice growers and later Olympic swimmers (and) California surfers," says Edward Tenner, of Princeton, N.J.

He should know.

A former Guggenheim Fellow and elaborately credentialed scholar, Tenner wrote the book on flip-flops — well, at least a chapter — in "Our Own Devices: The Past and Future of Body Technology."

Q: WHY DO PEOPLE LOVE FLIP-FLOPS?

A: We're lazy.

"They're the simplest footwear to use, to put on and remove," says Tenner, who admits to owning "a drugstore pair."

Q: ARE FLIP-FLOPS P.C.?

A: They have a mixed environmental record, Tenner says.

"They're the de facto footwear of the world's poor and protect many otherwise barefoot people from injuries and parasites. But plastic thong sandals are also not biodegradable and are a big source of marine and land pollution."

Q: SO ARE FLIP-FLOPS GOOD FOR THE SOLES?

A: "For most people who don't have standard problems with their feet, they're OK," says Brian Burn, a south Fort Myers podiatrist, though he points out that one of their main charms carries some risk: "They do leave your toes open for injury."

He also cautions pregnant women about flip-flops. "You're adding an extra 20 to 40 pounds, and that arch is now supporting more. It may be comfortable (to wear them, but) it may lead you to go from a size 10 to a size 11 while pregnant."

Q: YOU'RE WEARING FLIP-FLOPS WITH THAT?

A: Why not?

"Our climate lends itself to flip-flops, so it kind of crosses over and transcends any kind of rule," says Jennifer Williams, 42, who has owned the south Fort Myers boutique Jennifer's for the last two decades.

"Fashion followers love it because flip-flops are such a trend. They've become more mainstream in the last few years. My husband will say, 'You're wearing flip-flops?' and I say, 'Yeah, they're in right now.'"

In fact, Williams recently outfitted an entire wedding party in salmon-colored beaded flip-flops.

Q: HOW OFTEN DO WE NEED A PEDICURE?

A: At least every two to three weeks, says Becky Rogoszewski, of Terrence Michael Salon in south Fort Myers, if you want to keep them in flip-flop shape.

Q: ZEITGEIST AND GLOBALIZATION

A: For relative newcomers (within the last 50 years) to the nation's shores, these slappy shoes have had some major psycho-social impact.

"Flip-flops ... typify the informalization of life since the second World War," Tenner says. Plus, "they are the best symbols of the global economy and of the mutual influences of Asia, the Americas, and Europe," he says. "They are extremely simple to manufacture ... so making these sandals has been a favorite type of entry-level capitalism in the developing world."

Q: DO LAWMEN WEAR FLIP-FLOPS?

A: Oh, no — the bad guys do.

In fact, in an article in the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, Hawaiian drug runners reported that it's easy to spot plainclothes officers because they wear sneakers rather than the usual flip-flops. The cops have to wear shoes so they can run if they have to, Tenner says. Plus, there's the prison stigma: "Officials (favor them) for transporting prisoners because they're hard to run in."



Footware Phenomenon

Students flip for year-round fashion

By Megan La Voie

University daily, 6 November 2003

Fashion, fun and comfort are all part of the soul of the flip-flop, but this popular footwear phenomenon is best known for its simplicity.

Jennifer King, a junior human development and family studies major from Lubbock, said she wears flip-flops because they are quick and easy.

"You don't have to worry about finding clean socks, they are fast and you don't have to tie them," she said.

Flip-flops originally got their name from the sound one makes when walking in them.

The history of flip-flops is uncertain, but they are thought to have originated in the ancient Egyptian period.

According to www.podiatry.edu, pharaohs and their immediate families were the only people allowed to wear the unique sandals, and they were carried to their destination, then worn for the specific special occasion.

Flip-flops began appearing in the United States after World War II when soldiers brought back souvenir flip-flops from Japan.

Japanese flip-flops are called zoris if they have a flat bottom and Getas if they have a heel; the Japanese have been known to wear their version of the flip-flop with kimonos.

Ilona Harry, manager for Baker's Shoe Store in South Plains Mall, said flip-flops are popular with students because they are comfortable, and more popular with women than with men.

"Women like flip-flops better than men because they come in so many different styles and colors. Platform flip-flops are definitely the most popular amongst women," she said.

However, King said more men than women wear flip-flops in the winter.

"I guess guys don't really know that it's cold outside and they will wear them year round, but Lubbock weather is so unpredictable so I guess they have an excuse," she said.

Nick Futrell, an accounts payable manager with Outdoorsmen Inc., an outdoor goods store, and a senior management/marketing major from El Paso, said he does not wear flip-flops in the winter because he likes to have something warm on his feet.

"I got off the bus this morning and it was like 40 degrees outside and I saw several students wearing flip-flops," he said.

Futrell said people buy and wear flip-flops because they are easy and match everything.

"Flip-flops are easy on, easy off, they're comfortable and match everything, which is good because college kids are lazy," he said.

Futrell said flip-flop wearers have to practice good hygiene.

"Funky toe nails are gross. I have to say that most girls clean their feet and keep their feet up. If you're going to wear flip flops, you've got to cut your toenails and clean them," he said.

Dave Mitchell, owner of Outdoorsmen Inc., said he remembers people wearing flip-flops in the 1950s and '60s as shower shoes and beach shoes.

"Back when I was growing up flip-flops were strictly used as beach and shower shoes, but in the last five or six years flip-flops have become an overnight explosion and people wear them for everyday use," he said.

Mitchell said flip-flops are not only worn for comfort but also because they are a fad.

"Flip-flops are definitely a fad. People want to look like other people, and flip flops are what people are wearing. They are definitely the thing to wear for campus life," he said.

Clara Cobb, an employee with Outdoorsmen Inc., said when her mother was growing up in the 1970s flip-flops were popular.

"My mom always says she use to wear them in the 1970s; she thinks it's crazy that they are now back in style," she said.

Cobb said she likes flip-flops because they are cheap and a diverse shoe.

"They are so easy to wear, in style and they go with everything - you can wear them to work, to school and then out at night; they are a very diverse shoe," she said.

The only bad thing about wearing flip-flops is they are not supportive, Cobb said.

"I am sure all of us that wear flip-flops are going to have foot problems later in life," she said.

King said she often gets blisters and dirty feet from wearing flip-flops.

"They always turn your feet black and I sometimes get blisters between my big toe and second toe, plus dirt gets under your feet and its pretty gross," she said.

Occasionally when in a hurry, she has to run in her flip-flops, King said.

"I hate having to run in flip-flops. You look like a duck and you have to pinch your toes to keep them on," she said.



Brazil's newest hot export

MEANWHILE By Michelle Katigbak
The Philippine STAR 11/28/2003

A lot of good things come from Brazil – like heartfelt soulful Portuguese music, invigoratingly fresh and daring cinema, thought-provoking literature, amazing soccer players, dance-based martial arts capoeira, Roderigo Santoro (a.k.a. mute hottie surfer in Charlie's Angels 2). Additionally, not only are these Brazilian exports exotic and exciting but they're always a big hit on Manila's shores. Indeed, Filipinos have gone loco for anything Brazilian!

Riding high on the wave of the Brazilian craze, the latest hot export from the sunny shores of South America is the next must-have indulgence for your feet. Yup, Havaianas have arrived in Manila! Anyone who has been abroad must have heard of these stylish rubber flip-flops aptly coined "the best rubber flip-flops in the world." Havaianas is actually Portuguese for "Hawaiians" because of the relaxed and "hang loose" culture that inspired Brazilian designers back in the 1960s. Since then, Havaianas have been the footwear of choice for most Brazilians. From the elite Sao Paulo citizens to the Amazon natives, everyone sports these V-strapped thongs.

Recognizing the potential of these incredibly comfortable flip-flops (indeed my own pair have been permanently attached to my feet) Sao Paulo Alpargatas, the manufacturing company, decided to make Havaianas more fashionable and market them to the AB bracket all over the world. And now, Havaianas have taken the world by storm. Worn by the most famous the world over like Julia Roberts, Salma Hayek, Nicole Kidman, Sandra Bullock, and Sting, these famous flip-flops have finally made their way to our bright and sunny Manila shores.

Brought in by Terry S.A., headed by international soccer player Freddy Gonzalez and my good high school friend Anne Arcenas, Havaianas are slowly taking over feet all over Metro Manila. This is because they're not only functional and fashionable they're just plain fun and they can be worn with anything. I asked a diverse pool of people why they like this funky footwear and what couture choices they wear their Havaianas with.

CHRISTIAN GONZALEZ, operations manager, Manila: "I love Havaianas because they go with everything and they last forever. I've had the same pair since I lived abroad. I wear them with everything except my office and formal wear."

SAM YEN, advertising sales executive, Manila: "Havaianas are the most comfortable flip-flops your feet can surrender to. The variety allows you to match them with absolutely anything. I like wearing them with jeans and tank tops although I have worn them at night with dressier clothes for a twist. They always look good with bikinis too."

JON SYJUCO, general manager, Aura Athletica: "They're so comfortable and convenient I wear them as often as possible. They're the perfect lounge footwear. I like them with jeans and comfortable pieces like shorts and cropped pants from our store."

BERNICE PARSONS, Internet marketer; surfer, Hawaii: "I can wear them all the time. They're super comfy and come in great designs and they're well-constructed which isn't typical of a rubber slipper. I like wearing them with everything but mostly with denim skirts and bikinis."

IAN PARADIES, student, Massachusetts: "They are comfortable and convenient so I wear them as often as possible. All the colors and designs allow them to be worn with anything. I find them practical for casual occasions. I like wearing them with jeans, shorts, and cargo pants."

And as for me, I love wearing my Havaianas with absolutely everything. I love flip-flops and slippers so I wear them as often as I possibly can. They're so comfortable and stylish I even managed to wear them to a party in Greenbelt and sport them lounging around on the sunny shores of the beach. If you want a pair of über-stylish flip-flops that are so comfortable it's like you're walking on clouds that can take you from the house to the mall to the beach, you should definitely grab a pair of Brazil's Havaianas.

Havaianas are now available at Souk, Tabu, Aura Athletica, and Chocolate Clothing Company with new and exciting styles arriving in December.

Flops to flip for

Kelly Ettenborough
The Arizona Republic, 11 March 2004

Arizona's official state neckwear is the bola tie, adopted in 1973 by the Legislature. If the men and women under the copper dome ever decide to adopt official state footwear, our vote would be for the flip-flop.

You can wear and buy flip-flops anytime here. Can you say that about Minneapolis?

In more casual workplaces, flip-flops show up on weekend shifts (and often week-day shifts) during the summer. Does that ever happen in New York City?

With flip-flops becoming more formal, with fabulous embellishments and even flirty kitten heels, we expect to see them infiltrating fancier occasions. Could you get away with that in Chicago?

And frankly, you have to love a shoe where you can splurge on something fancy and still spend less than \$20, but if you want, you can spend almost \$600 for a pair.

Here are our picks for every age:

20s

You likely live in flip-flops and own multiple pairs. **Old Navy** has the best basic flip-flop we've found - comfortable, classic and long-lasting for \$3.50 a pair.

Save with an orange pair, adding this season's bright color to your shoe collection.

Splurge and buy a pair in every color, to fit your wardrobe and your whims. **30s**

The tropical influence is big this season. If you've been to Hawaii, you're already saving to go back. If you haven't been to Hawaii, you know you'd love to go. Get into the island mood with sequined flip-flops with a hibiscus pattern.

Save with these rubber-soled flip-flops, \$7.99 at **Target**. **Splurge** on these similar ones with a wooden sole, \$18 at **Robinsons-May**.

40s

Kitten heels give a grown-up sex appeal to flip-flops. They're the perfect choice for those days when flat flops are just too college days for you. And kitten heels are just as comfortable, with a lot more sass than their little sisters.

Wear them with jeans or a casual dress.

Save with these white Rocket Dog kitten heels, \$30 at **Macy's**.

Splurge on this pair of Manolo Blahnik red leather kitten heels with a fun zebra print, \$445 at **Neiman Marcus**. **50s**

You have a flower pin on your favorite jean jacket and you love to wear jewelry. Fancy up your feet, too, with all the flip-flops with lovely embellishments, from flowers to rhinestones to buckles.

Save with these ESNY flower shoes, \$14 at **Robinsons-May**. **Splurge** with these Jimmy Choo evening "sandals" in purple satin with rhinestones, \$595 at **Saks Fifth Avenue**.

A total flop

You'll flip for the latest in summer sandals

BY ATTICUS FISHER

The Boston Phoenix, 24 March 2004

Come this SUMMER, presidential candidates won't be the only ones flip-flopping — so will your feet. Or at least we hope they will, because the imminent arrival of warm weather means it's time to start thinking about putting the top down on your feet by slipping into the most comfortable and ubiquitous shoe on earth — the flip-flop. While you *could* stop by your local drugstore on the way to the beach, those two-dollar plastic blister-makers will take you only so far. Invest a little more money, and you'll have a pair that will walk you to the beach and beyond.

Surfers and other assorted beach bums have done more to further the cause of the flop than any other group. Release your inner Spicoli with a pair of **Reef's Fundamental Series leather flops** (\$30–\$34) from **Urban Outfitters**. If you're on a surfer's budget but still want cool, try **Quiksilver sandals** (\$8.95/women's; \$10.95/men's) from the **Quiksilver Boardriders Club**.

Where does the line between flip-flop and high-fashion shoe begin to blur? At **Aldo** and the **Tannery**, of course, where you can spend upwards of a hundred bucks on a pair of sandals. Extravagant? Perhaps, but these fab flops are guaranteed to put you on Carson Kressley's good side. At the Tannery you'll find a women's **Cole Haan/Nike hybrid** (\$110) that marries stylish Cole Haan leather and suede uppers with Nike treads. The men's version (\$104) takes an extra, high-tech step and adds the Nike Air sole, just in case you need to run a few laps around the pool to impress the women. Aldo beckons with **sandals for men and women** (\$29.99–\$79.99) in styles ranging from Euro to sporty to a hot-pink pair studded with rhinestones and sprouting one-inch heels.

If you find that your feet tend to express themselves in alternative ways, much like the tortured MassArt student who lives down the hall, the following flip-flops should satisfy your creative jones. Search out **Jasmine Sola** for a pair of **Havaianas Sugar Shoes** (\$25). These flops feature your basic black rubber sole and clear plastic thong, but with the added benefit of cushy hot-pink or blue inserts when you tire of the bared foot painted on the insole.

Sure, hemp is good for making rope and legalized-marijuana arguments, but it can also make for a fine sandal. Female enviro types should check out the **Hempest** for its line of **embroidered hemp sandals** (\$29.95) in brown, pink, or purple. And for those who want to go completely off the deep end, Sanuk has flops that go over the top. Surf over to the **Flip Flop Company** to buy pimpin' **Sanuk sleds** (\$12.95–\$43.95) featuring artificial turf, leopard prints, and deep-pile faux fur.

Flip-flops got their start in Japan, where the thong in *zori* and *geta* sandals facilitated the custom of removing one's shoes before entering a home. Return to the source via **Tokai** in the Porter Exchange. This Asian gifts, crafts, and clothing boutique carries a small selection of **tatami-mat zori** and **soft wood geta sandals** (\$18–\$35.50) in traditional Japanese styles. Kimono not included.

Where to find it:

- Aldo, various locations; www.aldocom.com.
- Flip Flop Company, www.flipflopcompany.com.
- Hempest, 207 Newbury Street, Boston, (617) 421-9944
- Jasmine Sola, 344 Newbury Street, Boston, (617) 867-4636; 37A Brattle Street, Cambridge, (617) 354-6043; 199 Boylston Street, Chestnut Hill, (617) 332-8415.
- Quiksilver Boardriders Club, 326 Newbury Street, Boston, (617) 859-0874.
- Tannery, 11A Brattle Street, Cambridge, (617) 491-0810.
- Tokai, 1815 Mass Ave, Cambridge, (617) 864-5922.
- Urban Outfitters, various locations; www.urbanoutfitters.com

Slipping into flip-flops

BY MADELEINE MARR

The Miami Herald, 31 March 2004

It was the sound heard 'round the fashion world.

Thwick-thwack, thwick-thwack, thwick-thwack.

In spring 2003 when Sigerson Morrison introduced a revolutionary \$85 kitten-heeled flip-flop -- the first flip-flop to be mounted on a heel -- the lowly rubber throwaway moved up more than a few notches.

The flip-flop had arrived.

Luckily for South Floridians, there's no looking back. The lovably loud, so-comfy- you-could-be-barefoot-if-you-didn't-know-better slip-ons just keep getting sexier, prettier, sleeker -- and more upscale.

For proof, check out Neiman Marcus in Bal Harbour. Right smack in front in the women's shoe department, flops by the likes of Manolo Blahnik, Kate Spade, Gucci and Prada clutter the display tables, gently nudging out strappy sandals and pointy toed pumps.

Fittingly, the price tags are more commensurate with the label than with the product -- most are constructed of rubber, plastic and little more than just a flash of leather. Burberry's cute, flat-as-a-board version -- in black and beige -- may look similar to the ones you pick up at Walgreens for less than a buck except for the telltale novacheck print and \$85 sticker on the sole.

Manolo's gone animalistic with a \$445 sleek kitten heel model -- a zebra print with a red kidskin strap -- and it's made mostly of -- egad -- canvas. But they're Manolos, after all; surely Carrie Bradshaw would approve. In fact, her alter ego, Sarah Jessica Parker is a fan of Lady Lanell's, who puts out a plain rubber thong encased in Swarovski crystals (\$145). "I loved my sandals," Parker writes on www.ladylanells.com.

We do, too. And not just Lady Lanell's. The whole bunch -- from Banana Republic's traditional beachy things (under \$50) to Chanel's wooden-soled, bejeweled clunkers (\$200 plus) and of course, the most coveted shoe of 2003, still priced at \$85 and selling "very well," according to Anne Ziegler, spokeswoman for Sigerson Morrison in New York.

High-end designer houses aside, you can ride the beach-chic wave blissfully on the cheap. Throughout South Florida, A Nose For Clothes has a nifty looking replica of the Sigerson Morrison called Seychelles for \$32. They also sell sparkly embellishments that you can clip onto the shoe itself (\$20 for two) to dress them up. "They're selling out; we reorder these weekly. We cannot keep them in stock; they're now on special order," says Freda Greenbaum, co-owner. "People buy them at least three at a time. They come in and can't decide what color." For the record, pink and orange are the top sellers, she says.

DOTS also has come out with an intentional doppelganger in colors like red, orange, yellow and turquoise -- for \$6. "I've seen them side by side and you literally can't tell the difference," says Tyra Chappell, marketing spokeswoman for DOTS, in Cleveland.

Chappell calls the trend as she sees it. "Generally, the whole femininity thing is in this year," she says. "You're seeing the [kitten heel flip-flop] worn with full, patio skirts, so big in the '50s."

Feminine, yes. Fun, yes. But let's not overlook the overall appeal of the flip-flop, kitten heel or no: It's effortless (No buckles or straps!); user-friendly (No shoe polish!); low-maintenance (No trips to the shoe maker!). How could the hip set *not* embrace them? Considering former fashion trends that border on the masochistic -- corsets, nipple rings, vinyl stilettos -- this is a lucky time, indeed.

Lucky, too, that style, these days, means never having to look *too* put together. Casual Friday has morphed into Casual Everyday. Very rare is it that an office worker -- especially in endless summer weather like ours -- pushes the boundaries. Though "ordinary" flip-flops -- like those Havaianas hot with models Kate Moss and Gisele Bundchen to throw on in between runway outfits -- may not cut it for a law firm or bank.

"Flip-flops are definitely very hot," says Corina Biton, spokeswoman for Neiman's at Bal Harbour. "[They're] all about comfort and the casual lifestyle. For someone who hangs out and goes to the beach or the gym every day." (Biton doesn't subscribe to flip-flops in the workplace, however -- check your corporate-attire manual, to be sure).

But they sure are showing up in the most unlikely of venues -- with the best kind of endorsement any flip-flop manufacturer could ask for: celebrities.

In September 2002, Sarah Michelle Gellar hung out after getting hitched to Freddie Prinze Jr. in \$30 Mallas. Oscar 2003 attendees snagged crystal encrusted Havaianas in their goodie bags. In January of this year, *Us Weekly* quoted Mandy Moore as saying (now ex) boyfriend Andy Roddick ``thinks I look most beautiful in jeans, a T-shirt and flip-flops."

Don't hate them because they want to be comfy.

Even the fashion-averse think flip-flops are pretty cool.

Miamian Patrick Gleber, 44, has a hard time wearing anything else. "I'm all about function over form," says the managing partner of Tobacco Road and Jake's Bar and Grill, who admits to owning only one suit ("I think it's a Hugo Boss; black or dark gray.") But his closet is a trove of flip-flops he *can* name: all-leather ones from Tommy Bahama and Quiksilver; springy Reefs; and Sperry Top-Siders.

"I probably dress a little too casually but *c'est la vie*," says Gleber. ``That's life living down here."

Thwick-thwack, thwick-thwack, thwick-thwack.

Le Pokkuri sans faux pas

Connaissez-vous le pokkuri ? Traditionnellement réservé aux geishas, ce socque surélevé au bout généreusement biseauté garantit une démarche sonore, fragile et donc... sexy. Remis au goût du jour par yohji yamamoto, le pokkuri est à tomber ! L'été sera haut.

Madame Figaro du samedi 20 mars 2004. Par

Élisabeth Paillié

La chaussure la plus en vue de l'été s'inspire des pokkuris des geishas. Un nom inconnu pour nous. On connaissait les zoris, bien sûr, baptisés tongs universellement et aussi, dérivés des zoris, les getas, ces socques en bois à brides, avec planches sous la semelle qu'on appelle " dents ".

Conçus surélevés pour la protection, ils essaieraient pour de multiples besoins : aller simplement au jardin, marcher dans la neige, sous la pluie, travailler dans les rizières ou cueillir les fruits sur les branches. Enveloppés dans une poche de tissu, ils servaient encore pour brasser le saké.

" *En Occident, la chaussure est une enveloppe et peut s'apparenter au corset*, explique Muriel Rousseau, ethnologue du costume et de la chaussure. *Au Japon, la chaussure est conçue très fonctionnelle, comme un outil. Elle doit correspondre à un usage. Et là-bas, on utilise davantage le pied pour effectuer tâches ou opérations variées.* "

Et de noter que dans les vœux de bonne année, les Japonais se souhaitent jambes fortes. Que pour le premier anniversaire, on offre au petit enfant une paire de zoris en lui souhaitant des jambes solides. Et que les chaussures jalonnent symboliquement les grands événements de la vie japonaise. Et le pokkuri ? Surélevé lui aussi et classé dans la famille des getas, il cultive sa différence par un beau volume en rondeur biseauté sur le devant.

Sculpté dans un bois clair et léger (paulownia ou kiri), il est creux à l'intérieur et abrite une clochette invisible. Il est encore porté aujourd'hui, nous apprend Muriel Rousseau, par les petites filles et les apprenties geishas. " *Les premières le chaussent, accompagné d'un kimono, pour la fête initiatique du Shichigosan, le 15 novembre, qui célèbre leurs sept (shichi), cinq (go) et trois (san) ans, âges critiques pour lesquels on leur souhaite une bonne santé.* "

Jolis pokkuris qui se sophistiquent de chrysanthèmes et de grues, symboles de longévité. Les secondes, appelées " maikos " (" mai " signifie " danse " ; les geishas, rappelons-le, ont une éducation artistique très poussée : danse, musique et poésie, encore aujourd'hui), font, en marchant, basculer leur corps en avant, rendant leur démarche sonore – " pok pok " –, instable et fragile, et donc pour l'homme... séduisante et féminine.

Les pokkuris s'enfilent sur des tabis (chaussettes à entredoigt) blancs en coton ou en soie. Chez les maikos, les brides codent, par leur couleur, leur niveau de formation. Et leurs kimonos très colorés expriment la jeunesse et la vitalité.

Au Japon, le pied, comme la nuque, est classé zone érotique. La poitrine, qui, dans notre culture, est exhibée, est aplatie sous le kimono, et le corps est caché. Take Hirakawa, journaliste, souligne que le pokkuri accentue la dimension de femme objet. " *Les geishas ressemblent à des poupées. On peut d'ailleurs faire le rapprochement avec les Chinoises, aux pieds tout petits et bandés. Dans ces deux cas de figure, elles se révèlent, pour les hommes, particulièrement sexy. Et les petites filles, au moment de leurs cérémonies, ressemblent à des geishas miniatures.* "

À Shibuya, quartier " fashion " culte, il s'amuse à noter que les ados reportent le kimono. Elles le décalent avec un jean et des mules qui font étrangement, remarque-t-il en riant, le même bruit que les pokkuris... " *Je m'attends à ce qu'elles ressortent un jour les getas et les pokkuris de leurs ancêtres.* " Yohji Yamamoto, lui, l'a bien senti. " *Je voulais dessiner des sandales pour l'été et la plage avec un petit grain de folie, un peu à l'image des sandales des geishas. Je voulais quelque chose de fort et d'un peu étrange. J'ai donc demandé à l'équipe d'Adidas de fabriquer ces modèles.* " Nous, c'est sûr, on lui emboîtera le pas.

Flip-Flops

Sandals keep getting better, more popular

By Chris Lassiter

Newsleader.com, 25th Apr. 2004

They never really went away. But, wow, have flip-flops made a comeback. Once a convenient kick-around shoe associated with beachwear, the thong sandals are one of the latest raves in the fashion industry. Whether they're a few bucks to a few hundred dollars -- high-heeled, platforms or traditional -- it seems like everybody's wearing some form of flip-flops.

"You know, I feel like it's the trend that refuses to die," said Dany Levy, founder, chairman and editor-in-chief of DailyCandy.com. The Web site is a guide to all things trend-related. "Every summer, they're sort of re-invented."

And this summer is no exception.

Kacky & P co-owner Kathryn Low buys and sells lots of flip-flops when the weather heats up.

"They're cute, stylish and they come in every color of shoe and style," Low said. "We've got billions of flip flops. They fly out the door. We can't keep them in the store."

Fashion and comfort

Flip-flops solved Kathie Strader's problem. A New Yorker vacationing in Staunton, Strader's feet are a little too long and too wide for most women's shoes she considers fashionable.

So she opts for the thong sandals, like the ones she is wearing in the above photo.

"I'm the flip-flop queen of New York state," said Strader, parading down North Augusta Street in a pair of bright orange flip flops. Strader said she has between 20 to 25 pairs, including footwear decorated in sequins. "They're comfortable and they're one size fits all."

Fashion and comfort is what Wendy Wolther had in mind when she designed Sugar Shoes, the latest craze in flip-flops. Sugar Shoes has a special patent on a sponge-dipped material they use for the soles of the thong sandals.

"It feels like you're walking on marshmallows," Wolther said. "Comfort's most important. If they're killing you, they won't sell ... It's like the Holy Grail, searching for the softest material."

Wolther and Levy both said the hottest selling flip-flops now are the ones with the kitten heels, and also the sandals with the best graphics.

"I'm noticing this season, flip-flops are becoming more and more ornate," Levy said.

"We have prints, preppy looks, Japanimation and bright colors," Wolther said.

Amanda Simon and Amanda Harmon, both students in Mary Baldwin College's Program for the Exceptionally Gifted, opted for pretty conservative flip-flops for their walk through downtown Staunton.

But if they wanted to spice them up, it wouldn't be too difficult.

The thong sandals are perfect for do-it-yourself fashion experts.

Wolther said a glue gun, gemstones and some markers are easy ways to embellish and personalize flip-flops.

"You can tie bows, put initials, have all sorts of fun," Levy said. "You can do anything with 'em."

Not for all occasions

Strader has calloused skin between her big toes and her second toes, just from walking in flip-flops so often. As easy, free and fashionable as the thong sandals may be, they're not perfect for every situation.

Levy said having your feet exposed can cause sanitary concerns under certain conditions, and they're not always appropriate for the work environment.

"I think it probably depends on the city. In New York, it's probably not appropriate to wear flip-flops," she said. "Actually, they're not ideal for walking great distances with the thong in between your toe."

Just a thong and a sole, flip-flops are just about the least bit of material you could find in a shoe. It's part of what makes the sandals comfy, but it also exposes your foot to the whole world.

And, depending on the foot, that could be quite embarrassing.

Dr. Oliver Zong, a podiatrist who specializes in cosmetic surgery, said people who will go through some amazing lengths to get their feet ready for flip-flops.

He performs surgeries to remove bunions and correct hammer toe, a situation where the toes began to curl under. According to Zong, the latest fad is toe-shortening, a process that involves making the second toe smaller than the big toe.

"They want to have surgery in the winter months, so they can wear open-toe shoes when they go out to the beach," Zong said.

Of course, not everyone needs such drastic measures to get their feet ready for flip-flop season. Zong said everyone could benefit from following simple rules like keeping skin moisturized with exfoliators, doing foot soaks, and following strict sanitizing procedures while getting a pedicure.

"The most important thing," Zong said, "is wearing shoes that fit."

The Beach Look, for School

By MARGARET TIERNEY

The New York Times, 25th Apr. 2004

THE first of April dawned blustery and cold, with pelting rain that gave the morning a crisp, wintry edge. But for 12-year-old Melanie Larkins and most of her friends at Middlesex Middle School in Darien, it was a long-awaited end to a school-imposed period of flip-flop exile.

"I've been waiting for this day like, all year," said Melanie, who donned her favorite pair of flip-flops to mark the occasion, the pink ones with the lime green polka dots.

The beach footwear has become trendy, and over the past few years more and more students have been going to school in them, warm weather and cold. As a result, many schools have felt compelled to respond. Some schools say flip-flops are inappropriate in the winter, others say they shouldn't be in school at all for safety reasons, while others don't think they are a problem.

Middlesex, for example, bans the shoes from November through March. "I think the whole flip-flop thing is ridiculous," said Debi Boccanfuso, the principal at Middlesex. "I mean, they'd wear them all year if they could."

This year, the flip-flop motif has become popular, appearing on jewelry, clothing and on the footwear itself. Flip-flops have even emerged as a political symbol in this year's presidential race, with Republican supporters clapping them to express their view that Senator John Kerry has "flipped-flopped" on issues.

Edward Tunick, an owner of a clothing store in the Noroton Heights section of Darien, has witnessed the fad up close.

Mr. Tunick started carrying a brand of Connecticut-made designer flip-flops, called Eliza B., in his store two years ago, after he bought a few pairs for his wife, Carol, and she persuaded him to start selling them.

"They are the biggest selling item in the history of my business," Mr. Tunick said. "Nothing has come close."

The flip-flops are on display in the shop window, in the front of the store, near the cash register and lined up down one aisle.

Eliza B., a division of Leatherman Ltd., an Old Saybrook company, has been in business since 1967 and up until about four years ago sold mainly men's belts. It was Eliza, the daughter of the owner of the company, who came up with the idea to put colorful ribbons on flip-flops.

"She started beating on me, saying we were missing the boat. But I just ignored her," said Cecil Lyon, the company's owner. "Then, in an effort to shut her up, we showed them at the surf show in Orlando."

Now, he said, the Eliza B. brand has surpassed the old belt business. "We can't make enough," Mr. Lyon said.

Eliza is now a 19-year-old student at the University of Colorado majoring in marketing. "She certainly figured out a way to pay for college before she even got there," Mr. Lyon said.

Part of Eliza B.'s success is the product's deft combination of two popular items, ribbons and flip-flops. Ribbons adorn the straps and come in an array of colors and motifs (polka dots, frogs and martini glasses are the most popular at Mr. Tunick's store) and can be paired with matching belts, key chains and handbags.

Mr. Tunick said he sells about 20 pairs a day in the warmer months for \$35 to \$45, and he is thinking about hiring a person this summer just to handle flip-flop sales.

Even students at New Canaan High School are profiting from the flip-flop craze. Last year's Junior Achievement class sold the

Toegoz brand, which offers college names on the straps in addition to other motifs, and made more money than any other class in the history of Junior Achievement businesses at the school - more than \$1,900, said Linda Lombardo, a teacher.

"We were bombarded with customers," said Babak Lashkari, a sophomore who was president of last year's mock company.

The business was so successful that this year's class is selling the flip-flops, too.

"We're pretty confident with the market," said Steven Rashin, 16, a junior and president of this year's company.

While high schools are mostly tolerant of students wearing flip-flops, the policy at middle schools varies from town to town, or in some cases by school district.

Donald Strange, principal at Western Middle School in Greenwich, takes a literal read of the school's policy against beach footwear and doesn't allow flip-flops, mainly for safety reasons.

"While they may be totally appropriate attire for the beach or a park, they are not appropriate at school," Mr. Strange said.

Across town, at Eastern Middle School, school officials are grappling with other apparel issues, like students wearing pajama bottoms to school and exposing their midriffs.

"Flip-flops are not high on the list, quite frankly," said Susan Lambert, the interim principal at the school, who said they weren't banned.

Parents are just as divided on the issue.

Avon Middle School won't allow students to wear flip-flops to school, but even if they did, Mark Hamel said he wouldn't allow his three children to wear them to school.

"Flip-flops are for the beach or the public shower," he said.

But Lisa Michels of Darien allows her three teenage daughters to wear them. "You've got to pick your battles," she said.

Many podiatrists said that while flip-flops were not intrinsically harmful for feet, they like to see the foot better protected during colder weather and vigorous activity.

"I have no strong objection to them; I'm a flip-flopper myself," said Dr. Kenneth Sokolowski, a podiatrist in Wethersfield. "But do I wear them to my office? No. Do I wear them jogging around the Broad Street green? No. Do I wear them when I climb a ladder? Certainly not."

But for now, the familiar "thwack" and shuffle of flip-flops won't fade any time soon from the hallways of New Canaan High School, no matter what the weather.

Alyssa MacKenzie, 16, said she preferred flip-flops to shoes any day.

"I hate it when my toes can't wiggle," she said.

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The Flip Flops Inquirer

A collection of quotes from or about celeb' flip flops fans

(To see a pic, click on the link)

Alicia Silverstone	<p>" Sitting on the cafe's patio in her all-cotton outfit - "Look how cute I look, and I'm wearing no wool," she says, pointing to her vegan-approved jeans, pullovers and plastic Adidas flip-flops - Silverstone look remarkably like Meg Ryan's kid sister. "</p> <p>W Magazine, June 2000</p> <p>" From the age of ten she lived near Bath, Somerset, for four years, a time she remembers for sneaking Maltesers and walking on cobbles in flip-flops. "</p> <p>GQ U.K., Nov. 1995</p>
Amanda Peet	<p>" Amanda Peet, dining with a girlfriend at Swingers on Beverly. Hell-Ay. In a punk-meets-preppie schoolgirl look, the <i>Jack & Jill</i> honey wore a denim mini (once again), ebony sweater with print-collared shirt underneath and funky flip-flops. "</p> <p>E !Online</p>
Amy Smart	<p>" Thong show : Amy says she couldn't live without her flip-flops. This wooden-heeled version -- plus toe ring -- gives a slightly dressy effect. "</p> <p>Seventeen, May 99</p> <p>" Amy Smart was a Bicentennial baby--and it shows. On this hot spring afternoon in Studio City, Calif., the star of NBC's <i>The '70s</i> (the follow-up to last year's <i>The '60s</i> premieres April 30) is dressed in an outfit that could have been lifted from her character's closet: faded, low-slung jeans, pink tank top (worn sans bra, Me Decade-style), and beach-casual flip-flops. "[I've] always been kind of a natural hippie girl," says the 24-year-old actress, who grew up in Topanga Canyon, a bohemian burb of Los Angeles. "</p>

	<p>Entertainment Weekly, Apr. 2000</p> <p>dOc: Second. What is with the foot-licking scene in Road Trip, where you literally lick Amy Smart's feet?</p> <p>TP: Well, I have a foot fetish. And one day Amy was wearing Flip-Flops, so I just decided to do the scene with her. It is something I am working on—my foot fetish—so in time I will get better.</p> <p>DOc Scenes Interview, about movie <i>Road Trip</i></p>
Beverley Mitchell	<p>" When they weren't shooting, both Bev and Catherine got rid of their dress shoes and opted for slippers or flip-flops. "</p> <p>Barry Watson Online</p>
Billie Piper	<p>" Billie Piper has married Chris Evans. The teenage bride wed her millionaire lover in a small Las Vegas ceremony costing just £200. The wedding was very casual - Billie wore a white shirt, pink sarong and flip flops - and they were joined by just six close friends. "</p> <p>Hello UK, May 2001</p>
Britney Spears <i>New</i>	<p>" Today, Spears wears a white Enyce jacket, a white tank top, drawstring pants and platform flip-flops. "</p> <p>Rolling Stone, July 1999</p> <p>" She goes into her bedroom to freshen up, which means changing from her slippers into a pair of platform flip-flops and putting on a smear of pale lipstick. "</p> <p>Rolling Stone, Sept. 2001</p> <p>" She's wearing a ripped-up pair of Levi's that hang so low on her hips that her lacy blue-and-pink thong is more than just peeping out over the top of the waistband. She also has on white flip-flops and a white Bebe camisole that's trying its best to contain her infamous and, to my eye, very real-looking breasts. "</p> <p>Vogue US, Dec. 2001</p> <p>" M is for Moroccan vibe, which is how Britney describes the decorative style of her Los Angeles pad. Inside, impersonating a harem girl, she slouches around in flip-flops and those flannel jammies. She likes sultry climates. 'When it's hotter,' she reasons, 'you tend to wear less clothing.' "</p> <p>The Observer, Feb. 2002</p>

Brittany Murphy	<p>" Current footwear includes a pair of flip-flops from the local Wal-Mart which also happens to be Murphy's favorite place to hang out when she's not on the set (it's a very small town). "</p> <p>Channels Magazine, Sept 2000</p>
Cameron Diaz	<p>" Diaz, walking slightly ahead in rubber flip—flops and a white tank top, her sky—colored eyes hidden by shades, has that certain Angel confidence, but would an Angel have her bra straps showing? "</p> <p>Premiere, Sept 2000</p>
Charisma Carpenter	<p>" Charisma first auditioned for the role of Buffy. "I was wearing overalls and these bright orange flip-flops and a jacket, and I was just kind of hanging, you know, because I felt that Buffy could really just be herself," she remembers, a wry smile playing at the edges of her mouth. "She could wear the flip-flops and she could be low-key and still be very ? it wasn't about looking as cute as I could to get the part. It was about just being cool, just being fun with your identity. And that's how I felt. The other girls in the room were really dressed up, and they were wearing very high school trendy clothes with knee-high stockings and short skirts." "</p> <p>Jump, Apr 98</p> <p>"I was auditioning for Buffy while I was doing Malibu Shores," she explains. I guess they knew it was going to get cancelled soon. So I auditioned wearing overalls, a leather jacket and flip-flops. It was really a bizarre day. "</p> <p>" They're also pleased that Cordelia's not so perfectly dressed all the time. She wears flip-flops now, something which probably makes her more earthy to fans. "</p> <p>Xpose, March 2000</p>
Charlize Theron <i>up</i>	<p>" My wardrobe usually consists of flip-flops. Flip-flops or nothing at all. Because that inch really is a lot. "</p> <p>Charlize to Dr Drew.com, 2001</p> <p>" In fact, when Maria visited the set, Charlize was doing her own stunt-driving in a cherry-red Mini -- in flip-flops! "I always drive barefoot," the South-African born actress explains. "It's just a thing with me, even when I was rehearsing and learning how to drive, they all laughed at me. I live in flip-flops -- my feet don't really like to be confined in anything. I feel safer when I can feel my feet are on top of the pedals and not underneath."</p> <p>Eonline, Oct. 2002</p>

Christina Applegate	<p>" In the afternoon, Poolside at the fabulos Sunset Marquis Hotel, Christina Applegate comes to us directly from a session of eye movement-desensitization therapy designed to help her with her cigarette cravings. The first thing we notice (after we notice her clothes: black frock over jeans, flip flops under toes) is the same thing we first noticed at the bakery: Her lips are not at all like Kelly Bundy's, red painted and made for oral delight; rather, they are thin, delicate ribbons and quite pale. "</p> <p>Rolling Stone Magazine, Apr. 2002</p> <p>" Dressed in ratty jeans, a tank top and flip-flops, her face bare of makeup, she looks tiny and delicate. "</p> <p>L.A. Times, Apr. 2002</p>
Claire Goose	<p>" Q : WHAT KIND OF LOOK WOULD WE FIND IN YOUR WARDROBE? A : I like 50s styles and I have a lot of Capri pants, which I love wearing with flip-flops. and then if I'm going out I simply add heels. "</p> <p>Celebrity Looks, Aug. 2001</p>
Daisy Fuentes	<p>" All you'll need are a few CDs, a good book, a bathing suit, shorts and flip-flops. "</p> <p>Daisy on Daisyfuentes.com</p>
Denise Richard	<p>" I wear grungy clothes when I'm home. I'm such a jeans person and I wear sweats all of the time. I like being a girl and getting ready and everything sometimes, but I'm so flip flops, jeans, and a T-shirt mostly, I really am. "</p> <p>Denise to Fashionavenue.com, 2002</p>
Drew Barrymore	<p>" Drew Barrymore wears <i>On Your Feet's</i> suede-fringe flip-flops. "</p> <p>Teen Movieline, Summer 2000</p>
Erin Bartlett	<p>"I have a turtle tattoo on my toe. I love turtles. And sexy feet. I'm all about the manicure and pedicure and sensitive feet.....And i love in flip-flops, so i love to show my tattoo."</p> <p>Erinn Bartlett in FHM, May 2001</p>
Estella Warren	<p>Q: How do you dress when you're not modeling? A: I like simple, feminine, easy clothes. I usually wear flip flops and dresses, sweaters, jeans and tanks. I love basic sweaters like turtlenecks or v-necks and low cut pants that sit on your hips.</p> <p>Interview on Celebrity Wizzard, 2000</p>

<u>Famke Janssen</u>	<p>Famke Janssen, brunching at Grey Dog's Coffee. West Village, InWhySee. Trendy in a denim skirt, fisherman's hat and flip-flops, Famke dined with a young chap in cargo capris and a muscle tee.</p> <p>E !Online, May 2001</p>
<u>Gillian Anderson</u>	<p>" GILLIAN Anderson seems a bit confused by British weather. Leaving the New Ambassadors Theatre in London after the Vagina Monologues, the X Files star wore an interesting ensemble of woolly winter coat and flip flops. "</p> <p>Daily Mirror, July 2002</p>
<u>Gisele Bundchen</u>	<p>..."I don't like to get dressed up for no reason. I'm a jeans-and-T-shirt kind of girl. Jeans and these really great corduroy pants with a drawstring waist from Juicy Couture-you wouldn't think that these fabrics are for hot weather, but they're so light. And what girl doesn't love accessories? Some of my favorites are my black Balenciaga bag-given to me by Nicolas Ghesquiere, for my birthday- and my Ipanema flip-flops, which I brought over from Brazil. And I don't go anywhere without Gucci sunglasses and a baseball cap."</p> <p>Gisele to Vogue US, March 2002</p> <p>" The 21-year-old supermodel is wearing a brown sweater, new dark jeans, white socks, and white \$14 flip-flops. "I don't like heels. I look like a monster tall woman in them," she says. "</p> <p>Harper's Bazaar, Feb. 2002</p>
<u>Gwyneth Paltrow</u>	<p>" Even Gwyneth Paltrow has given the phrase, "surf's up," new meaning around SoHo with her sports rubber flip flops. "</p> <p>Fashion Planet</p> <p>" Gwyneth Paltrow at the premiere of Butterfly, sporting a chic long gown with casual flip-flops. "</p> <p>Mirror Magazine, Aug 2000</p>
<u>Heather Locklear</u>	<p>" Q :How would you describe your style?</p> <p>A : Stretch capri pants, tank tops and flip-flops. "</p> <p>In Style, Oct 99</p>
<u>Helen Hunt</u>	<p>Looking like <i>her</i> ayem java fix was not yet complete, H.H. wore a tight white tee, board shorts, flip-flops and her hair in a high pony (à la <i>I Dream of Jeannie</i>).</p> <p>E !Online, July 2001</p>

Jennifer Aniston	<p>"I like a pair of comfy pants, flip flops and a T-shirt. And when we pick a restaurant, my criteria is: Where can I wear this?"</p> <p>W Magazine</p> <p>" You can take the girl out of the backyard, but, well, as Vogue's Astley puts it, "I basically see her with her hair all wild, wearing flip-flops and cutoffs." "</p> <p>US Magazine, Sept 99</p> <p>" Mrs Brad Pitt is as funny, emotional, glowing and sweetly grounded as she ever was before, dressed in flip-flops, sweatpants and a tiny T-shirt. "</p> <p>Elle UK, Nov 2000</p> <p>" This summer, Mrs. Pitt has been particularly low-key, going as far as wearing flip-flops and a long Calypso beach skirt for one premiere. "</p> <p>Women.com, 2002</p>
Jessica Simpson	<p>" Jessica Simpson, chowing down at the Outback Steakhouse in Wappingers Falls. New Yawk. (About 90 miles north of InWhySee.) Joined by her ex-humpy-hottie Nick Lachey, of beboppin' fame, the Britney clone was still chomp-worthy in a gray hooded sweatshirt, white parachute pants and flip-flops. "</p> <p>E ! Online, Sept 2001</p> <p>It's 8 am and Jessica Simpson, 21 and her mother, Tina Simpson, 42 are walking down a hall in Los Angeles's luxurious Century Plaza Hotel wearing nothing but matching white terry cloth bathrobes and flip-flops, "I honestly can't remember the last time I didn't have on heels," Jessica says, "Even my sandals have heels."</p> <p>Self, April 2002</p>
Joan Crawford	<p>" She smiled as she speaks, and she does look glorious. She is wearing no makeup, her graying hair is brushed back casually from her forehead, and she is dressed in a simple striped robe -- a modified caftan, perhaps -- and the kind of thonged flip-flops you might buy in any drugstore. And yet it is possible to see in her the legendary Joan Crawford of so many memorable movies -- the tall, erect beauty whose carriage and clothes and makeup set the style for two decades. "</p> <p>Photoplay, July 1975</p>

<p>Julia Roberts</p>	<p>" I'd come into rehearsal in my T-shirt, sweatpants and flip-flops. And then when I would come on the set to shoot everybody was like, 'What happened to you? "</p> <p>People Magazine, March 2000</p> <p><i>" Q : Did you get any whistles on the set?</i></p> <p>A : You walk on at 6:30 in the morning in sweats and flip flops, basically looking like a cute boy. "</p> <p>E ! Online, may 01</p> <p>" Julia Roberts just keeps moving, her private thoughts kept private. That's called style, and she has it. That's why she can stride into a mall in cutoffs, T-shirt, flip-flops, hair twisted into a topknot, and still look charming. "</p> <p>" Roberts's movie uniform is flirty and functional: Snugfitting V-neck tees, flip-flops and feminine, knee-length skirts keep her looking cool while she's being held captive by a hit man (James Gandolfini). "</p> <p>US Magazine, March 01</p>
<p>Julia Stiles</p>	<p>" In her parachute pants and Puma flip-flops, she looks less like a Hollywood starlet than like the soccer player she was in high school. "</p> <p>New York Magazine, Apr 99</p> <p>" It's fun hanging out with people on my floor, walking around in flip-flops. I like it. "</p> <p>Julia to AP, January 2001</p>
<p>Julianne Moore</p>	<p>" West 11th Street is quiet as the early evening sun fades, and there is only one person sitting at the tables outside the French bistro, an unremarkable woman with a wicker-work basket, wearing a white top, calf-length trousers and a pair of flip-flops, with a man's Swiss Army watch on her left wrist. "</p> <p>The Guardian, Aug 99</p>
<p>Kate Hudson <i>New</i></p>	<p>" When I first meet her, she has a caffè latte in her hand, a tiny Pomeranian on a leash ("Clara Bow"), and a very decorative pedicure (a painted flower with a rhinestone at the center); also four bands on her wedding finger. She is dressed in a white vest, a denim skirt in heavily seamed patchwork, and terry flip-flops. "</p> <p>Vogue US, Sept. 2002</p>

Kate Winslet	<p>" Despite her new-found wealth, Winslet can't abide the Hollywood lifestyle, where everyone has a personal manicurist. "I wouldn't even join a private gym. I put on my flip-flops and go down the sports center to swim in toddlers' wee and old ladies' snot." "</p> <p>British Vogue, Jan 98</p>
Katie Holmes	<p>" Later that evening, Katie meets me at a downtown Wilmington watering hole. She's working a wrap sweater, jean skirt and flip-flops. "</p> <p>Jane, Oct 2000</p> <p>" Katie is dressed for lunch looking casual and gorgeous. In the midst of responding to a query about what she's wearing (Earl jeans, Abercrombie & Finch plaid shirt, Armani rectangular glasses, black flip-flops, crimson nails-"They need a pedicure. I have the world's ugliest feet") we happen up the simple matter of her Tiffany watch. "</p> <p>Nylon Magazine, Dec 2000</p>
Kelly Rowland (Destiny's Childs)	<p>Kelly looks like she's ready to spend a day at the mall dressed in a pink T-shirt, jeans, and flip-flops.</p> <p>Vibe, Feb. 2001</p>
Keri Russel	<p>" I'm a tank-top girl, and I wear more hippie things, like long skirts with flip-flops. "</p> <p>WB.Com, 1999</p> <p>" <i>Q : Can't-live-without clothing.</i></p> <p>A : flip-flops, worn-in jeans and tank tops. "</p> <p>Jump, Dec 98</p> <p>" Oh, we've all seen her at awards shows, slinking around in Armani with those enviable shoulders exposed. But it turns out that Keri glamour moments were a bit of an aberration. Until now. "<i>When it comes to clothes, I've tended to be basic--jeans, tank tops and flip-flops,</i>" she admits. "</p> <p>Mademoiselle, Nov. 2001</p> <p>" Wearing worn-in jeans, a white cardigan, flip-flops and yellow-tinted shades that look like they belong on a member of Weezer, Keri seems more like the college kid she plays on TV than a Hollywood star. "</p> <p>Seventeen, Apr.2002</p>

Kirsten Dunst	<p>" Q : Describe your typical look.</p> <p>A : If I'm just hangint out, I wear jeans, flip flops, and a tank top. Going out, I pair my denim with heels and a sexy top. "</p> <p>Cosmo Girl, Apr 01</p>
Kristin Davis <i>Up</i>	<p>" Q: What do you wear when relaxing?</p> <p>A: Jeans and flip-flops. "</p> <p>Pagesix.com</p> <p>"I think Kristin is one of the more beautiful women I have ever seen—she just can't look bad," says Sarah Jessica Parker. "In my opinion she's the prettiest when she has on no makeup and she's wearing jeans and a little sweatshirt."</p> <p>In Los Angeles, Davis favors jeans and flip-flops. A "homebody," in the words of her mother, Dorothy, she loves tending her garden, doing yoga and hiking near her house.</p> <p>InStyle Makeover, Spring 2002</p>
Kylie Minogue	<p>" Kylie Minogue arrives at the reception, announcing, perhaps foolishly, that she is "looking for a man". She is wearing a backless cashmere top and well-cut grey trousers. Her hair is loose and touches her bare shoulders. Time has narrowed her face and, at 32, she looks more like a Forties film star than an ex-teen poppet. Kicking off her flip-flops, she orders coffee and settles into an old armchair that swaps her small frame, Ronnie Corbett-style. "</p> <p>GQ Magazine, July 2000</p>
Leslie Bibb	<p>"Q : What's in my closet ?</p> <p>A : "Diesel jeans, pashmina scarves, tennis shoes and my J. Crew flip-flops." "</p> <p>WB.Com, 2000</p> <p>"Q : What's the sexiest bit of clothing you own?" "A : My J.Crew Flip-Flops, I seem so conceited, but we talked about feet..."</p> <p>US "FHM", may 2001</p>
Liv Tyler	<p>" "I'm just doing what I love to do and riding the wave of it," she says, kicking off her flip-flops in a Covent Garden hotel suite, the latest stop on a worldwide promotional tour for her new comedy One Night at McCool's (reviewed left), which goes on release tomorrow. "</p> <p>The Times, Apr 01</p>

Majandra Delfino	<p>"For the Birds: Weird, inexplicable phenomenon? That certainly describes the look Roswell's Majandra Delfino threw together at GQ's party for Mark Wahlberg. The exotic-bird action on her skirt is strange enough, but when you add in the flip-flops, the straps (bra and bag) and the rose-colored glasses, aliens can't be far behind."</p> <p>" E " Entertainment television, July 2000</p>
Mandy Moore	<p><i>Q : So, what's the real Mandy Moore like? Bargain bins or Gucci dresses?</i></p> <p>A : (Bargain bins) is totally me! I love vintage stuff! The little bracelet that I'm fiddling with is a cheapie late 80's gold bracelet! I'm a total Jeans and t-shirt girl and I love second-hand stuff. At the same time, I love to be feminine and I love to dress up. But if I have to pick out of the two, it would definitely be casual and comfortable over uptight and heels. <i>(Pointing to her heels)</i> This is nice once in a while but I can stand to be in sneakers, flip flops, sweatshirts and do my hair in a pony tail. No makeup and no fuss! I'm definitely a no fuss girl!</p> <p>Interview on MTV Asia</p> <p>Star Style: She says: "I live in jeans, tank tops and flip-flops."</p> <p>From Reelteen.com</p> <p>" Teen pop sensation Mandy Moore loves her lips but hates plucking eyebrows! She's into Gap flip-flops, Puma sneakers... and platform shoes! "</p> <p>Lime Magazine, Feb.2002</p>
Marie-Kate Olsen	<p><i>" Q: Sneakers or Sandals: Which are better?</i></p> <p>A: Sandals – but we call them flip-flops. "</p> <p>MKA Magazine</p> <p>" Q :Could you throw together a top five list of what's in, and what's out?</p> <p>MKO : What's hot right now is: vintage turquoise jewelry, cute flip-flops, peasant tops, and a great handbag. "</p> <p>BBC Online, May 2002</p>

Marla Sokolov	<p>" The Joan Rivers question, "Who are you wearing?" is not an issue. Her faded jeans, flip-flops, and mint green sweater all could have been bought at Broadway Plaza. And considering Sokoloff's penchant for shopping during semimonthly trips home, possibly they were. "</p> <p>From Diablomag.com</p>
Marley Shelton	<p><i>" Q: Do you like easy-to-wear clothes, or do you prefer glamour? And what are your favorite colors?</i></p> <p>A: I go both ways. I love dressing up, but I also adore my sweats and flip flops. In terms of color, it depends on what mood I'm in. "</p> <p>Talk City, Feb 2001</p>
Meg Ryan <i>New</i>	<p>Meg Ryan turned heads as she tramped through the lobby of the St. Regis in her bathrobe and flip-flops on her way to the hotel's spa.</p> <p>Curry.com, dec. 2000</p>
Michelle Kwan	<p>" When I was living in the dorms at UCLA, I was just one of the students, I wasn't special, I wasn't treated special. I just go out there with my baseball cap, my hooded shirt, my flip-flops, I roll out of bed, and I'm there. "</p> <p>Interview from Athlete's Voice.</p>
Michelle Williams	<p>" Dressed in brown pants, orange flip flops, and a blue T-shirt emblazoned with a huge truck, and with her hair in slightly unkept pigtails, Williams stand out among the mostly formal customers in an airy Four Seasons dining room. "</p> <p>Flaunt Magazine, Aug 2000</p> <p><i>" Q : What about being better paid?</i></p> <p>A : Yeh, you're better paid in film and TV but at the end of the day, I would rather sleep in a bus and have a pair of flip-flops than all the money in the world by doing something I don't believe in and fervently love. "</p> <p>Time, 1999</p>
Natalie Portman	<p>We're tucked away in a windowed alcove of a huge Chelsea photo studio, where Natalie has just spent the last eight hours in front of the camera, posing rather unselfconsciously for the cover of this magazine. She's changed out of the Prada dress she was wearing and into her own college clothes: black floods and green flip-flops, a tab-collared jean jacket and a top that bares most of her tan belly. As she tucks one leg under herself like a kid, it's easy to imagine underneath all the purple eyeshadow she's wearing, she might still look 13.</p>

	Nylon, August 2001
Nikki Cox	<p>Personal Must-have: "Heels. I almost always wear heels. It's either heels or nothing at all. Save for some flip-flops."</p> <p>The WB.com, may 2002</p>
Pamela Anderson	<p>"Leave it to Pam to go shopping in an eye-popping outfit like that. It was a hot day and she was wearing a barely-there black bikini top, sheer white slip-like skirt and flip-flops."</p> <p>The Globe, 2001</p>
Portia de Rossi	<p>" Portia de Rossi, strolling through Gelson's market early Sunday morning. West Hollywood. The Rapunzel-esque d.R was not so glam on this supermarket saunter, wearing smudged ebony jeans, a black fitted button-down with ivory trim and a pair of thick flip-flops. "</p> <p>E !Online</p>
Reese Witherspoon	<p>" Q: <i>What is your most worn, always cute and comfy, favorite outfit?</i></p> <p>A : I'm a white-T-shirt-and-jeans girl. I like T-shirts and jeans from Gap, and Converse All-Stars or flip-flops. "</p> <p>Reese to Teen Magazine, Sept. 2001</p>
Rose McGowan	<p>"Do you normally do it this way?" asks Rose, after arriving at the trendy cafe she picked out. She looks kind of goofy in neon D&G wraparound sunglasses, a faded T-shirt, platform flip flops and, like, techno-y orange sport pants.</p> <p>Jane, Dec. 2001</p>
Sarah Jessica Parker	<p>"Sex and the City" star Sarah Jessica Parker reportedly is a big fan of Lady Lanell flip-flops and has a pair in every color.</p> <p>Philadelphia Daily News, June 2002</p>
Shannon Doherty	<p>" I'm very casual. I love Levi's, Frankie B. jeans and little T-shirts. I have about 320 pairs of shoes, including lots of sneakers and flip-flops. I think Gucci and Jimmy Choo make the sexiest heels, though. "</p> <p>Shannon to In Style, August 2001</p>
Shiry Appleby	<p>" The lovely <i>Roswell</i> ladies were hanging out, so I strolled over and had a chat with sweetheart Shiri Appleby, who had on a really cute kind of bohemian top, jeans and flip flops. "</p> <p>Teenmag.com, 2002</p>

Suzanne Ward	<p>" "I like to dress up, don't get me wrong. But when I'm at home, I have big pajama pants on, a T-shirt, my flip-flops. Yeah, I'm a biiiiiig flip-flop freak."</p> <p>After buying somewhere in the neighborhood of 15 pairs of those comfortable beach thongs - thick ones, flat ones, in a variety of colors, one decorated with rhinestones - her boyfriend, producer David Robinson (whom she met on <i>The In Crowd</i>), sternly put her on flip-flop restriction for the year.</p> <p>OK, he let her off the hook for one more: a white pair. But only because the white pair she already has was developing a tear after three or four years of wear and regular bleaching - you know, to keep them perfectly white. "I held them up - this was after I was put on restriction - I was like, 'Don't you think I deserve a new pair?'" Who could deny those puppy dog eyes, the pout and the pleading? And as Ward so simply explains: "They're only \$5 or \$8 a pair." "</p> <p>" My obsessions are heels and flip-flops. I love flip-flops. I mean, for a \$100, I can buy ten pair of the. Oh, God, I love them! But people treat you like white trash when you wear them. They're like 'Flip-flops? You must be kidding ? "</p> <p>Controversy, Sept.-Oct. 2001</p>
Thandie Newton	<p>" Thandie Newton, the British actress who inflames the passions of three men with chiseled jaws (including Tom Cruise) in <i>Mission: Impossible 2</i>, does not so much enter the cafe of the Four Seasons Hotel as materialize. One minute the circular foyer is empty. The next, it contains a slight, straight-haired young woman, bare-legged below a slim black skirt, wearing red flip-flops and no apparent makeup. "</p> <p>Akron Beacon Journal, May 2000</p>
Tina O'Brien	<p>" I think you can always judge someone by their shoes. It's amazing how many people will go out dressed to the nines and then not worry about what they've got on their feet. Shoes are my passion. I'm not quite Imelda Marcos, but I do have 13 pairs in my wardrobe, ranging from pretty flip flops and sandals to boots. "</p> <p>Tina to Sunday People, June 2002</p>
Tyra Banks	<p>" She made <i>People Magazine's</i> "10 Best Dressed List" of 1998, but likes to wear jeans and flip-flops when she's not working. "</p> <p>Askmen.com</p> <p>ET: Big question. A lot of women probably want to know - what do you wear on a first date because you have said "It's very important what you wear underneath in addition to what you actually wear for clothes. What would you wear on first date?"</p>

	<p>TB: I have a date tomorrow. Let's see. I probably don't want to look like I'm trying too hard so I'll wear some jeans and probably a T-shirt and some flip-flops. (Laughs). Some Nike flip-flops or something.</p> <p>ET Interview, Aug. 1998</p>
Wynona Ryder	<p>"Winona Ryder -- another Size 1 Girl -- waded around nearly undetected, looking decidedly un-glam in understated black pants with black thick-soled flip-flops. "</p> <p>Salon Entertainment, Sept 98</p>



Julianne Moore

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Flip Flops in Movies and TV Films

Thanks to Pup Fish, Dom, Leon and Ines for their help to complete this list.

If you want to contribute, send a mail to : vincent_barth@yahoo.fr

(New titles are in red)

Actress	Title	Director	Date	DVD	Pics
Mélanie Doutey	La Fleur du Mal	C. Chabrol	2003		
Florence Thomassin	Le Cœur des hommes	M. Esposito	2003		
Zoé Félix	Le Cœur des hommes	M. Esposito	2003		
Mandy Moore	A walk to remember	A. Shankman	2002		
Michelle Rodriguez	Blue Crush	J. Stockwell	2002		view
Britney Spears	Crossroads	T. Davis	2002	Zone 1	
Juliette Lewis	Hysterical Blindness	Mira Nair	2002		view
Uma Thurman	Hysterical Blindness	Mira Nair	2002		view
Mia Kirshner	New Best Friend	Z. Clarke-Williams	2002	Zone 1	view
Cristiana Reali	Romance sans parole		2002		
Eliza Dushku	The New Guy	E. Dekter	2002	Zone 1	view
Alyson Hannigan	American pie 2	JB. Rogers	2001	Zone 1 Zone 2	
Shannon Elisabeth	American pie 2	J. B. Rogers	2001	Zone 1 Zone 2	view
Maribel Verdu	And your mother too !	A. Cuaron	2001	Zone 2	
Kirsten Dunst	Crazy/beautifull	J. Stockwell	2001	Zone 1 Zone 2	view
Kirsten Dunst	Get over it !	T. O'Haver	2001	Zone 1	view
Mila Kunis	Get over it !	T. O'Haver	2001	Zone 1	view

Lisa Kudrow	The opposite of sexes	D. Roos	1998	Zone 1 Zone 2	
Kristy Swanson	Bad to the Bone	Bill L. Norton	1997		
Demi Moore	G.I. Jane	R. Scott	1997	Zone 1 Zone 2	
Sandra Bullock	Speed 2	J. de Bont	1997	Zone 1 Zone 2	
Demi Moore	Striptease	A. Bergman	1996	Zone 1 Zone 2	
Christine Taylor	The Craft	A. Flemming	1996	Zone 1 Zone 2	
Patricia Arquette	Beyond Rangoon	J. Boorman	1995		
Barbara Gorton	Denise calls up	H. Salwen	1995	Zone 1	
Ashleigh Aston Moore	Now and Then	Leslie L. Glatter	1995	Zone 1	
Christina Ricci	Now and Then	Leslie L. Glatter	1995	Zone 1	
Gaby Hoffmann	Now and Then	Leslie L. Glatter	1995	Zone 1	
Thora Birch	Now and Then	Leslie L. Glatter	1995	Zone 1	
Jeanie Drynan	Muriel's wedding	P.J. Hogan	1994	Zone 1 Zone 2	
Sadie Kratzig	Confession of sorority girls	U. Edel	1993	Zone 1	view
Lauren Holly	Dragon : The Bruce Lee story	R. Cohen	1993	Zone 1	
Laura Dern	Afterburn	R. Markowitz	1992		
Anouk Grinberg	August (Août)	H. Herré	1992		
Tiffani-Amber Thiessen	Saved by the bell Hawaiian style	D. Barnhart	1992		
Rachel Ward	And the sea will tell	T. L. Wallace	1991		
Carrie Mitchum	Dead silence	P. O'Fallon	1991		
Lisanne Falk	Dead silence	P. O'Fallon	1991		
Renée Estevez	Dead silence	P. O'Fallon	1991		

Rachel Ward	After dark my sweet	James Foley	1990	Zone 1	
Aili Solvio	Amazon	M. Kaurismaki	1990	VHS	
Victoria Abril	Tie me up ! Tie me down ! (Atame !)	P. Almodovar	1990	Zone 1	
Kim Valentine	Grandma's House	Peter Rader	1989	Zone 1	
Joy, Leanna and Monica Creel (triplet)	Parent Trap, Hawaiian honeymoon	Mollie Miller	1989		
Annie Semler	Magee and the Lady	G. Levitt	1987		
Barbara Steisand	Nuts	M. Ritt	1987	VHS	
Mary Stuart Masterson	At close range	James Foley	1986	Zone 1	
Farah Fawcett	Extremities	R. Young	1986	Zone 1	
Mariel Hemingway	Creator	I. Passer	1985	Zone 1	
Farah Fawcett	The burning bed	R. Greenwald	1985	VHS	
Cybill Shepherd	The long hot summer	S. Cooper	1985	VHS	
Julianne Phillips	Summer Fantasy	N. Nossek	1984		
Daryl Hannah	Summer lovers	R. Kleiser	1982	VHS	
Corynne Charbit	The Goat (La Chèvre)	F. Veber	1981		
Margaux Hemingway	Killer Fish	A. Margheriti	1978		
Melody Thomas Scott	Piranha	Joe Dante	1978	Zone 1	
Aude Landry	Les liens de sang (Blood relatives)	Claude Chabrol	1977		
Mariel Hemingway	I want to keep my baby	J. Thorpe	1976		
Ali Mac Graw	Love story	A. Hiller	1970	Zone 1 Zone 2	
Martine Kelly	The Big vacation	J. Girault	1967		
Marina Vlady	OSS 117 : Terror in Tokyo	A. Hunnebell	1966		
Mylène Demongeot	OSS 117 : Mission for a killer	A. Hunnebell	1965		
Ava Gardner	The Night of the iguana	John Huston	1964	VHS	
Sue Lyon	The Night of the iguana	John Huston	1964	VHS	

Audrey Hepburn	Green Mansions	Mel Ferrer	1959	VHS	view
Emmanuelle Riva	Hiroshima mon amour	Alain Resnais	1959	VHS	



Twice as Nice--On the left is **Johanna**, dressed in a Hawaiian-style dress, and **pink** flip-flops. Johanna is currently a student at the University of California at Irvine; she is pictured working for a law firm that was taken on **October 31, 2001**--Halloween Day!

The other picture is my grandnephew **Benjamin**, who also had his picture taken in 2001, the year he was born. Benjamin is wearing a **red-white-and-blue** jump suit, and yes, is a barefoot boy with a cheek of tan!

Flip flops in TV series

Thanks to Anders, Mike and Leon for their help to complete this list.

If you want to contribute to the list,

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(New titles are in red)

Serie	Actress	Seasons	Photo
9010 Beverly Hills	Lindsay Price	1998-2000	
9010 Beverly Hills	Tori Spelling	1998-2000	
Acapulco H.E.A.T.	Alison Armitage	1998	
Angel	Charisma Carpenter	1998-	
Angel	Amy Acker	2001-	
Baywatch	Alexandra Paul	1992-1997	
Baywatch	Angelica Bridges	1997-1998	
Baywatch	Brooke Burns	1998-2000	
Baywatch	Carmen Electra	1997-1998	view
Baywatch	Donna D'Errico	1996-1998	
Baywatch	Erika Eleniak	1989-1992	
Baywatch	Gena Lee Nolin	1995-1998	
Baywatch	Kelly Packard	1997-1999	
Baywatch	Marliece Andrada	1997	
Baywatch	Mitzi Kapture	1998-99	
Baywatch	Nancy Vallen	1996-1997	
Baywatch	Nicole Eggert	1992-1994	
Baywatch	Pamela Anderson	1992-1997	
Baywatch	Shawn Weatherly	1989-1990	
Baywatch	Traci Bingham	1996-1998	
Baywatch	Vanessa Angel	1991	
Baywatch	Yasmin Bleeth	1994-1997	
Baywatch Hawaii	Krista Allen	1999-2001	view

Baywatch Hawaii	Stacy Kamano	1999-2001	view
Buffy the vampire slayer	Emma Caulfield	1998-	view
Buffy the vampire slayer	Michele Trachtenberg	2000-	view
Charlie's Angels	Kate Jackson	1976-1979	
Charmed	Alyssa Milano	1998-	
Charmed	Shannon Doherty	1998-2001	
China Beach	Dana Delany	1988-1991	view
Clueless	Rachel Blanchard	1997-1999	
Dawson's creek	Katie Holmes	1998-	view
Dawson's creek	Meredith Monroe	1998-2000	
Dawson's creek	Michelle Williams	1998	view
Dawson's creek	Sasha Alexander	2000-2001	
Dharma & Greg	Jenna Elfman	1997-	
ER	Julia Margulies	1994-2000	
Felicity	Keri Russel	2001	view
Flipper	Anja Coleby	1996-	
Flipper	Colleen Flynn	1995	
Frasier	Jane Leeves	1993-	
Friends	Jennifer Aniston	1994-	view
Gilmore Girls	Lauren Graham	2001-	view
Home and Away	Christie Hayes	2000-	view
Home and Away	Kate Garven	2000-	
Home and Away	Rebecca Cartwright	1998-	view
Home and Away	Tammin Sursok	2000-	
Just Deal	Erika Thormahlen	2000	
May be it's me	Reagan Dale Neis	2001-	view
Melrose Place	Alyssa Milano	1997-98	
Melrose Place	Amy Locane	1992	
Melrose Place	Brooke Langton	1996-98	
Melrose Place	Josie Bisset	1992-99	

Melrose Place	Laura Leighton	1993-97	
Melrose Place	Lisa Rina	1996-98	
Odd Man Out	Marina Malota	1999	
Odd Man Out	Marnette Patterson	1999	
Odd Man Out	Vicki Davis	1999	
Pacific Blue	Amy Hunter	1998-2000	
Pacific Blue	Darlene Vogel	1996-1999	view
Pacific Blue	Shanna Moakler	1998-2000	
Pensacola	Kristanna Loken	1997-1998	
Relic Hunter	Tia Carrere	1999	
Roswell	Shiry Appleby	1999-	
S Club 7 in L.A.	Hannah Spearritt	2000	view
S Club 7 in L.A.	Rachel Stevens	2000	
S Club 7 in L.A.	Tina Barrett	2000	
S Club 7 in Miami	Rachel Stevens	1999	
Sabrina, the teenage witch	Melissa Joan Hart	1996-	view
Saint-Tropez	Adeline Blondieau	1996-	
Sex and the city	Cynthia Nixon	2000-	
Sex and the city	Sarah Jessica Parker	2000-	view
Sex and the city	Kristin Davis	1998-	
So little time	Ashley Olsen	2001-	view
So little time	Marie-Kate Olsen	2001-	view
Son of the beach	Jaime Bergman	2000-	
Son of the beach	Leila Arcieri	2000-	
Son of the beach	Kimberly Oja	2000-	
Sunset Beach	Susan Ward	1997-	
Sweet Valley High	Brittany Daniel	1994-1998	
The Bionic Woman	Lindsay Wagner	1976-1978	
The King of Queens	Leah Remini	1998	
The Sopranos	Jamie-Lynn Sigler	1999-	

The view	Lisa Ling	1999-	view
Tucker	Katey Sagal	2000-	
Tucker	Noelle Beck	2000-	
Will & Grace	Debra Messing	1998-	
Yes, Dear	Jean Luisa Kelly	2000-	
Yes, Dear	Liza Snyder	2000-	
Young Americans	Cyndi Johnson	2000	
Young Americans	Kate Bosworth	2000	

